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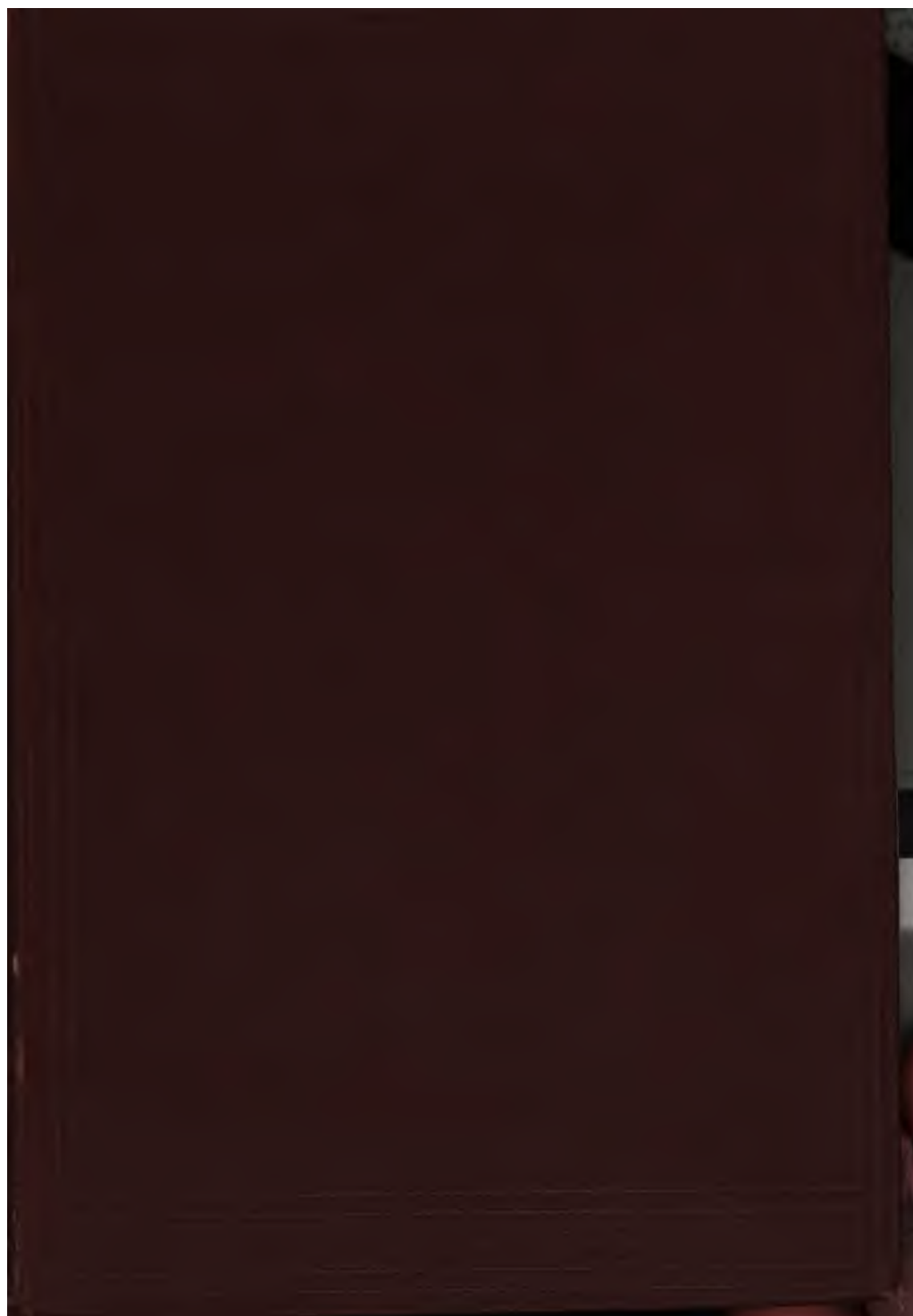
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THE BEQUEST OF  
JOSEPH HENRY THAYER  
LATE PROFESSOR IN THE SCHOOL

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20 March 1902



Gen<sup>l</sup> to Hon<sup>ble</sup> Secy of War



Card Beecher contributes to the  
line of the int.

**HISTORY OF OPINIONS**  
**ON THE**  
**SCRIPTURAL DOCTRINE**  
**OF**  
**RETRIBUTION.**

**BY**  
**EDWARD BEECHER, D. D.**

**NEW YORK:**  
**D. APPLETON AND COMPANY,**  
**549 AND 551 BROADWAY.**  
**1878.**



Report of  
Prof. J. H. Thayer

March 20, 1902.

(977)

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## P R E F A C E .

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THERE is something truly affecting and sublime in the present attitude not only of the Church, but of the whole community, on the subject of future retribution. More than eighteen centuries ago the Saviour of mankind foretold a coming day of judgment, in which all men should stand before his bar, be divided into two great divisions, and hear from his lips their inevitable doom.

To-day the great question that arouses humanity to intense thought is, "What is the import of that sentence?" As to the righteous, however, there is no dispute. The main interest centres on the question, "What is the doom of the wicked?" This has fixed the attention of the world upon the import of a single word, *aionios*.

This has raised the question: "What were the opinions of those to whom Christ spoke, and what were their usages of language? How did they understand him?"

When we approach this question, we find that their opinions and modes of speech were the result of a preceding age; and, when we approach that age, we find that

their opinions and use of words had been moulded by preceding ages.

It seemed, therefore, indispensable to begin at the beginning, and to trace the development of thought and language, on the great question of retribution, from the outset to the days of Christ, and then to inquire into the import of his words, in the light of all preceding ages; and then to trace the development of opinion downward through the Christian ages.

In no other way is it possible to understand the present state of opinion in those great bodies that are called, each by its subjects, THE CHURCH, and in those freer independent churches whose only authority, in profession, is the Bible, but who, as well as the great Churches, are still under the influence of the traditions of preceding ages.

At this time there are at least four positions assumed as to the destinies of the wicked:

1. That they are to be ultimately annihilated.
2. That they are to be ultimately restored to holiness and happiness.
3. That their punishment is endless.
4. That we cannot decide which of these views is the truth.

It was not my purpose, as an historian, to attack or to defend either of these positions. But it was not possible to give the opinions of the age of Christ and of the early Church without inquiring how they understood his words.

The position which I have assumed on this point was

not anticipated when I began this work. I had adopted the common traditional view, until I came in contact with the views of that eminent Christian scholar, Dr. Tayler Lewis, to whom I wish to express here my great obligations and my profound gratitude. His fidelity to the evangelical system is beyond question, and yet the enlargement of his views and his devotion to the truth were such as to lift him above local prejudices, and to give him courage not only to differ from long-established traditional opinions, but, what is more, when thoroughly convinced, clearly and unequivocally to announce his conclusions.

I have not, however, merely rested on his opinions, but have followed out the line of thought indicated by him, in various and extended investigations, the result of which has been, as will be seen by attentive readers, to confirm the truth of his positions.

One great fact is prominently brought out in this history, the import of which has not as yet been fully apprehended. God, through many centuries of old, was engaged in training up the leaders of his hosts, such as Abraham, the father of the faithful, and Moses, the great lawgiver and prophet of whom Christ was the anti-type. Yet no revealed doctrine of future eternal punishment was used in their training, or was announced by them. No doubt, as I shall show, they had the hope of future reward, and believed that in some way there would be retribution to the wicked. They believed that God is, and that he is a rewarder of all who diligently seek him, and of course

a judge and an avenger of all who do evil. But no definite conceptions of time and place seem to have been communicated to them. And yet they were trained up to Christian manhood, and have been in all ages pillars in the temple of God.

This great fact at least has a bearing on the question how far a definite belief of endless retributions is fundamental in carrying out the purposes of God.

I do not propose to discuss this question, but to suggest it, as a matter of thought, while we trace the dealings of God in ages in which he acted through a legal system not containing that element in the offered rewards or threatened penalties of the law.

Knowing that I was treading on controverted ground, I have sought to take no evidence at second hand, but to go to the original authorities. For the power to do this I am under great obligations to the Astor Library, and that of the Union Theological Seminary, as well as to that of Prof. Schaff. Through these I have had access to all the Fathers—Greek and Latin—as well as to historians, records of councils, dictionaries, concordances, and commentators. I have also availed myself of the best works on the Zend-Avesta, and the relations of its system to the Jews, and of standard works on Egypt and its religious systems. I have also carefully studied the apocryphal and apocalyptic writings of the Jews, a department of literature that has been too much neglected, but which throws light on one of the most important periods in the

history of man. The age of the Maccabees is a field for the novelist, the poet, the painter, the historian, as yet open for worthy illustration.

Knowing how many doctrinal and denominational prejudices and committals are affected by this history, I do not expect to avoid dissent, or even severe criticism. This is the necessary condition of all true progress. I am not indifferent to the favorable opinions of my fellow-men. But I have mainly sought to be true to God and to the truth, and I do not deprecate the most thorough criticism of men in whom God dwells, and who are animated by his spirit, for it is for the interest of all to know the truth. And as the apostle has said, the day is coming in which every man's work shall be made manifest, for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire, and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.

On the only foundation, Christ, there may be yet much wood, hay, stubble. May God grant that it may be soon consumed, whosoever it may be—that only the gold, silver, and precious stones, may remain! I ask no exemption from the test for myself, and I know that it is for the good of all others. May God hasten the day!



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## ERRATUM.

Page 140, lines 5 and 8, for "four centuries" read "two centuries."



# HISTORY OF OPINIONS

## ON THE

### SCRIPTURAL DOCTRINE OF RETRIBUTION.

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#### CHAPTER I.

##### *RETRIBUTION, TEMPORAL AND ETERNAL.*

No idea is more universal among men than retribution. The laws of the material world exert a retributive power, rewarding those who regard and obey them, and punishing those who disobey. So also the laws of all social organizations involve retribution. It is found in the family, in the school, in the social circle, in business, and in the state.

Retribution, also, has been believed to exist in the various systems of supernatural powers which men in various ages and climes have accepted as true. Under these systems some things are required and some things forbidden, and rewards and punishments are expected in accordance with obedience or disobedience.

If the idea of retribution is carried into a future life, and to this the idea of eternity is added, it becomes a motive of supreme, all-controlling power, for what is this short life compared with eternity?

Moreover, if the power of assigning the retributions of eternal joy or woe is believed to reside in a certain order of men, then this belief invests them with terrific sway. Such was the fearful influence once wielded by papal excommunications and interdicts. The power of priesthoods and governments has for ages rested on such convictions. The most terrible despotisms under which men have ever groaned have had this basis.

It is, therefore, a matter of great moment to understand the real system of the universe under which we live, and the real retributions which we are to expect. For this true knowledge we are dependent on the Word of God. Nor do we rely upon it in vain. Nothing is more full than divine revelation on this subject. And yet there is far from being unanimity of views among those who follow this standard. And though the subject has been often discussed, yet it is thought by some learned and pious divines that the full energy of investigation in the Church has never yet been put forth on this subject, and that a more profound discussion is needed and is at hand.

#### A PROFOUND DISCUSSION INEVITABLE.

Prof. Schaff, of Union Theological Seminary, eminent alike for learning and piety, seems to think thus. In his "History of the Apostolic Church" he speaks as follows: "Each period of Church history is called to unfold and place in a clear light a particular aspect of doctrine to counteract a corresponding error; till the whole circle of Christian truth shall have been traversed in its natural order." He illustrates this as to the Trinity, the person of Christ, the depravity of man, and the system of redemption. He then adds: "In our times the doctrine concerning the Church seems to be more and more challenging the

attention of theologians. And finally, Eschatology, or the Doctrine of the Last Things, will have its turn." There is a profound reason why the radical discussion of future retribution should come last, for that retribution is the final issue of the whole system, and, to explain and justify it, all false conceptions of God must have been exposed and his true character revealed, the highest forms of the principles of honor, justice, sympathy, and love, must have been disclosed and invested with divine authority, and the preceding system as a whole, and in all its parts, have been understood and vindicated. This is the most profound and all-comprehending work to which the mind of man can be summoned. To this all things are now tending. Nothing can be more evident than that a peculiar, profound, and universal interest is felt on the subject of future retribution, and that, to prepare for the coming investigation, a careful review of past discussions and opinions is indispensable. In the common histories of doctrine, such as those of Münscher, Hagenbach, Neander, and Shedd, the history of the doctrine of retribution is not considered at all under this title. Neither is it so considered under any title as to include more than one part of the Scripture doctrine of retribution. So far as it is treated, it is included under the head Eschatology. By this is meant, as stated by Dr. Schaff, the doctrine as to the last things, or the winding up of the present system. Viewed thus it includes death, the world of spirits, the final coming of Christ, the last judgment, and the retributions of the world to come.

#### TEMPORAL RETRIBUTION IN THE OLD TESTAMENT.

This mode of viewing the subject is defective, in that it omits a large and important part of the Scriptural doctrine of retribution. The only form of retribution promi-



nently presented in the Old Testament as existing for four thousand years was temporal, and did not refer to the spirit-world and a future state. This, the common histories of doctrine omit, and consider only the doctrine concerning the retributions of the future state.

Of this omission one important effect has been to take from the divine system of temporal retributions the importance and influence which God once assigned to it, and to produce a tendency to entirely overlook it, and to concentrate the thoughts on the retributions of the eternal state. But certainly temporal retributions must have been, in the judgment of God, an element of great power, and well worthy of attentive consideration, or he would not have mainly derived the motives of his revealed government from them for four thousand years.

These remarks on the predominance of temporal retributions in the Old Testament are not meant to affirm or imply that there was not some belief in a future state and its retributions, among the Old Testament saints, going beyond any express revelations of the Mosaic law, and disclosing itself in their recorded experience.

What is meant is this : that in the law of Moses, taken as a law, a rule of life, individual and national, there is not one motive derived from a future state and its retributions. All is derived from this world and the present life. The same also is true of the Patriarchal dispensation, and of the world before the flood.

It is true that the Christian Fathers carry back to the retributions of the Old Testament their ideas of future retribution. This is owing to the fact that the analogical relations of this material system to the spiritual world are such that these punishments may be intended as types of spiritual punishments. Thus, natural disease and death

may be types of spiritual disease and death ; natural defeat and bondage, of spiritual defeat and bondage ; natural darkness, of spiritual darkness ; natural fire, of spiritual fire. But, even if it is so, nothing is expressly said about it in the Law of Moses. The system of temporal punishments is set forth without any express reference whatever to the spiritual world and a future state. Nevertheless, the analogies are often so striking that, in after-ages, they have been extensively regarded as types and shadows of coming events in the spiritual world. Thus the judgments of God on Pharaoh, and the redemption of Israel out of Egypt, have been regarded as types of God's judgments on the great adversary, and the redemption of the Church. Yet of this the Law of Moses says nothing.

It may have been God's purpose, as suggested by Fairbairn, since the Mosaic dispensation was typical, to keep always within the typical sphere of the material world, so as not to mingle the two spheres, and anticipate the spiritual dispensation. This may be the reason why no direct reference is made to the spiritual world and the future life, even when otherwise we should expect it. But, whatever that reason may be, I shall not attempt to develop it, but, following Moses, shall, in considering his system, keep within the temporal sphere.

As a general fact, we little realize how long this world was under the system of temporal retributions. It is not yet four thousand years from Abraham to our day. How long is such a period to us ! But from Adam to Christ was fully four thousand years. In these years there was a long progress of thought and of revelation. In order to form any distinct conception of it, we need to unfold it somewhat, and not, as is often done, to attempt to present

in one comprehensive summary what is called the teaching of the Old Testament.

The four thousand years before Christ, according to the common chronology, may be divided into five periods. The first, of two thousand years, from Adam to Abraham; the second, of five hundred years, from Abraham to Moses; the third, of five hundred years, from Moses to Solomon; the fourth, of five hundred years, from Solomon to the return from the captivity in Babylon; the fifth, of five hundred years, from the return from the captivity to Christ.

Without going into detail, the outline or illustration of temporal retributions during these periods will next be set forth.

#### NATURAL DEATH PRONOUNCED ON ADAM.

In the first period, the first and most striking instance of retribution was the sentence of natural death pronounced upon Adam and Eve for their transgression. This sentence, as interpreted by Paul, included in its scope all their posterity.

Great efforts have been made under dogmatic influences to carry back the idea of spiritual death to the sentence pronounced on Adam and his race. But that sentence is its own interpreter. "Till thou return unto the ground, for out of it wast thou taken; for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." The Jewish writers of the Alexandrine period and the Greek Fathers took this view, and their interpretation is confirmed by the Apostle Paul. Any other view is contrary to the whole genius of the Old Testament typical dispensation.

Another instance of threatened retribution was the future punishment of the tempter by the seed of the woman, of which more will be said hereafter. It is the first hint of a redeeming and avenging Messiah, which, in

after-ages, was so fully developed as the central theme of revelation.

The deluge, also, was threatened and inflicted by God during this period. To this divine retribution our Saviour emphatically refers as an illustration and warning of coming judgments on Jerusalem.

#### TEMPORAL MOTIVES ADDRESSED TO THE JEWS.

In the second period occurred the judgment of God on Sodom and Gomorrah, to which our Saviour also refers, as a solemn warning to the men of his age, in view of the impending ruin of Jerusalem. In the third period were the divine judgments on Egypt, the redemption of the Israelites from bondage, and the development of the Mosaic economy in the wilderness, and the establishment of the nation in Canaan. It is not wonderful that the civil and criminal law of the nation thus established should be sustained by temporal retributions. But it is very remarkable that the providential rewards of fidelity to God and his system were derived entirely from the material sphere. If the nation was loyal and obedient, God promised that they should have health, long life, fruitful seasons, military ascendancy among the nations, national wealth, honor, and power. If disobedient and idolatrous, God threatened that they should be scourged by famine, disease, defeat in war, captivity, poverty, shame, and contempt. The powers of language are exhausted in giving intensity to these motives. A brief experiment easily made will bring the whole subject before the mind, and for the sake of vividness of conception it is well to make it. Let any one read attentively the twenty-sixth chapter of Leviticus, and then ask, What are the rewards and punishments by which God here sought to induce the Israelites to obey? Is there any allusion to a

future life and eternal retributions? Do they not relate to fruitful seasons and health, and victory in war, and the protecting presence of God, on the one hand, and drought, famine, disease, defeat, captivity, and death, on the other? Then read the twenty-eighth chapter of Deuteronomy—a still longer and more earnest and eloquent chapter, full of promises and threatenings—and see if one can be found that does not relate to this life. In that whole chapter we shall find not one reference to a future life, not one motive derived from it. The same is true of the whole law.

During the wanderings of the nation in the wilderness, temporal rewards and punishments were always close at hand, of the most powerful kind. During the period of the Judges, the fortunes of the nation varied with their obedience or rebellion, as God had threatened. The ascendancy of the kingdom under David was the result of fidelity and obedience to God. The division and decline of the nation in the fourth period, and their final ruin, were owing to the apostacy of Solomon, and to subsequent relapses into idolatry, till the ten tribes were led captive by the King of Assyria, and the rest by the King of Babylon.

The great prophets, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, in all their warnings of the apostatizing nation, did not refer to future punishments in the spirit-world, or to redemption from them, but to the terrors of the siege, of famine, of the capture of the city, and of captivity in a strange land, or to redemption from such captivity.

In the fifth period, after the return from the captivity until Christ, the system of temporal retributions was still pursued, and finally culminated in the terrible destruction of Jerusalem, in anticipation of which the Saviour wept.

## TEMPORAL RETRIBUTION TAUGHT BY CHRIST.

It is worthy of special notice that, although he had the most vivid conceptions of future punishment, he yet confined himself in his prediction of coming retribution on Jerusalem to the temporal sphere, as did Moses. Listen to his words: "And when he was come near, he beheld the city and wept over it, saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this, thy day, the things which belong to thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes. For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, and shall dash thee to the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation."

In addition to the special theocratical government of the Jews, God represents himself as administering a providential government during the ages over the surrounding nations of Egypt, Assyria, Tyre, Moab, Edom, and the like, and inflicting on them temporal retributions.

But, if we examine this whole governmental system for four thousand years so far as express promises or threats are concerned, we cannot infer from it any knowledge or thought of a future life, or of any retributions beyond this world.

## HOW WAS BELIEF IN FUTURE LIFE DEVELOPED?

Nevertheless, there was in fact a course of feeling and thought on the subject of a future life, during all these ages, which had finally culminated in well-defined opinions as to retributions in a future life before Christ came.

It is not often realized, but it is true, that in the last period, during the persecutions of the Jews by Antiochus

Epiphanes, one hundred and seventy years before Christ, a spirit of martyrdom was developed, based on an open-eyed vision of the resurrection, a future life, and eternal rewards, which was not exceeded even by the glorious martyrs after Christ. This wonderful development of a full belief of eternal rewards in a future world must have been the result of powerful antecedent causes, the accumulated force of which, during the Old Testament dispensation, was thus finally developed.

Of the facts there can be no doubt. They are fully developed in trustworthy and universally accredited historical records. They are facts that cannot be ignored, and that demand a thorough investigation of the causes of such wonderful results.

It is necessary now to consider these causes, and the mode of their operation. There is an intimate connection between this inquiry and the development of opinion on the doctrine of retribution, both at and after the days of Christ.

## CHAPTER II.

### *OPINIONS IN THE AGE OF THE MACCABEES.*

IN the preceding chapter, a general view has been given of God's system of retribution. It appears that by Moses, as a lawgiver, he made no revelation of a future state, and no appeal to its retributions, but derived his rewards and punishments entirely from this life.

From this many have inferred that there was among the Jews no knowledge or belief of a future life. In opposition to this view, we alleged that there were causes among the pious Jews leading to a belief of a future life and its retributions, growing out of a covenant with God, and their personal experience and habits of communion with him, and confirmed by certain prominent and sublime events of their history. In proof of this, the great fact was alleged that in the days of the Maccabees, nearly two centuries before Christ, there was developed among the Jews a clear conception and a firm belief of the doctrine of the resurrection, and of the retributions of a future life, a belief of such power that it sustained illustrious heroes in the torments of most cruel martyrdom. These facts are of such fundamental importance that they deserve a more full development. Moreover, the age and circumstances in which they occurred call for particular consideration, if we would thoroughly understand the thinking of subsequent ages.



## POINT OF VISION.

It is for this reason that we shall make the age of the Maccabees a point of vision for the whole history. It is a remarkable point in many respects. It is the beginning of Jewish theological and religious writing outside of the Bible. Before this time there was the Bible alone. We, at this day, can hardly conceive of such a state of things. The Bible is now so imbedded in commentaries and systems of theology by the Fathers, the Scholastic divines, the Reformers, and the modern sects, that it is quite overshadowed by them. But up to this point the Old Testament stands in sublime majesty and solitude, overshadowed by nothing. But here, human comments, reasonings, inferences, and developments, begin to make their appearance.

It is no less remarkable as making the completion of the circuit of those great periods of foreign influences to which the Jews were, in the providence of God, exposed, and by which it has been alleged that their religious thinking was greatly affected.

## EGYPTIAN, PERSIAN, AND GRECIAN PERIODS.

The first of these periods was during their early captivity in Egypt, in which they came in contact with a clearly-defined doctrine of the immortality of the soul and of future retributions, connected with the theory of the transmigration of souls. The second was during the captivity of Babylon, and during their subjection to the Persian power. During this period they came in contact with the system of Zoroaster, of Eastern origin, containing a doctrine of future retributions, involving the resurrection of the body, the eternal reward of the righteous at a future judgment, the temporary punishment and final restoration

and purification of wicked men, and the annihilation of evil spirits, so as to harmonize the universe in good. This system is based on professed direct revelations from God, and not on philosophical speculations.

The third period was during the Greek power of Alexander and his successors. During this period they came in contact with a doctrine of the immortality of the soul and of future retributions, based, not on a professed revelation, but on philosophical principles. It was also, as in Egypt, connected with a doctrine of the transmigration of souls. In it, also, the doctrine of the preëxistence of souls was held, based upon their divine, immortal and eternal nature, they being regarded as a kind of self-existent and immortal divinities. These views were developed by Plato, and are repeated by Cicero as derived from him. The first of these periods lasted over two centuries, and terminated in the fifteenth century before Christ. The second lasted from the Babylonian captivity to the conquests of Alexander, over two centuries, terminating in the fourth century before Christ. The third lasted till Christ, for the religious and philosophical systems of the Greeks and Romans were substantially the same. The age of the Maccabees is a part of the third period. Now, it is certainly remarkable that, though the doctrines of a future life and of eternal retributions are not taught in the law of Moses, yet the Jews were, in the providence of God, so long and so repeatedly brought into contact with various forms of those doctrines that they could not but think of them, and the age of the Maccabees is noteworthy as marking the completion of this great circuit of influences on the Jewish mind. It is no less remarkable as the point at which we unmistakably meet the first clear and full development among the Jews, and outside of the Bible, of the doctrine

of retribution in a future life as an element of all-pervading popular power. Before this point we have no Jewish theological and religious writing, except what is contained in the Hebrew canon of the Old Testament. And it has been earnestly debated whether the doctrine of future retribution occurs in the Old Testament at all. But it cannot be debated whether that doctrine was promulgated at this point, for it was clearly proclaimed—as clearly as at any subsequent time.

#### GENERAL PLAN.

We shall, therefore, in the first place, clearly prove this statement, and then, from this point of vision, cast our eyes backward and endeavor to trace this river of opinion upward to its source ; then returning, we shall trace it downward to Christ, and thence onward through the Christian ages.

#### MARTYRDOM AND WAR.

The fundamental characteristics of the age of the Maccabees are, in the first place, a great religious persecution of the Jews by Antiochus Epiphanes, and then a great religious war. This war, like that under Cromwell, or that of the Netherlands, was based on deep religious convictions, by which a handful of heroes were enabled to encounter and defeat the whole power of the Syrian kingdom of Antiochus, and these convictions were based on eternal retributions. It was a crisis not only in the history of the Jews, but in that of the religion of the Bible and of humanity. It affected the Jews, not only in Palestine and Egypt, but throughout the world. Antiochus, co-operating with a party of Jewish apostates, deliberately undertook to eradicate the religion and religious usages of the Jews, and to replace them by those of Greece. He repeatedly took Jerusalem, and plundered the temple and

massacred the people. He set up the altar of Jupiter on that of Jehovah, and defiled the temple by sacrifices of swine's flesh thereon. He sought to destroy all the copies of the Law of Moses, and punished with death any with whom they were found. He prohibited not only the temple-service, but the keeping of the Sabbath and circumcision. Women who circumcised their children were put to a cruel death with their infants. Edicts commanding these things were published throughout Judea, and officers were appointed to enforce them. Inasmuch as Christianity was involved in Judaism, this was, by anticipation, a fundamental assault on the kingdom of Christ. This assault was met first by martyrdom and then by war. And the story of the heroic warfare of Judas Maccabeus and his brothers in defense of the law of God, the narrative of their victories, defeats, and martyrdoms, resulting in the final independence of the Jews, is inferior in interest, sublimity, and importance, to no history in the language of man.

A lofty and noble enthusiasm of faith in God and in eternal retributions was developed, from which a great religious reaction toward faith, and the more spiritual observance of the law of God, took its rise, which by sympathy elevated the tone of spiritual Judaism among all the Jews dispersed in all parts of the world.

## FAITH IN ETERNAL RETRIBUTIONS.

This faith in the resurrection and in eternal retributions pervaded the whole army of Judas Maccabeus as thoroughly as it did the army of Cromwell, and was testified by public acts in behalf of those who died in battle, of which we shall elsewhere more fully speak. It was still more strikingly manifested in the case of the martyrs.

Among these a mother and her seven sons were put to death by Antiochus for refusing to abjure the law of Moses and sacrifice to the gods of Greece. They endured extreme torments with wondrous and heroic power, through the hope of the resurrection and of eternal life. The second of the seven martyred brethren said, with his last breath, as he was dying of extreme torments, "Thou, O persecutor, removest us from this present life, but the King of this world will raise us up to everlasting life, since we die for his laws" (2 Macc. vii. 9). The fourth said to the tyrant: "It is a great blessing, when dying by the hands of men, to cherish the hope inspired by God, that we shall be raised up again by him. But to thee there shall be no resurrection unto life" (2 Macc. vii. 14).

The heroic mother, after cheering and sustaining her seven sons in the mighty conflict, at last died a triumphant martyr's death.

#### DOGMATIC STATEMENTS.

Not only was the belief in immortality and eternal retributions thus set forth in heroic actions and suffering, but it was also embodied in didactic statements. The author of the Wisdom of Solomon wrote in the second century before Christ, after the establishment of the kingdom of the Maccabees. He does not refer to these martyrs by name, but no one can doubt that they were before his mind when he wrote the following eloquent unfolding of the doctrine of future retribution and of eternal life:

"But the souls of the righteous are in the hands of God, and there shall no torment touch them. In the sight of the unwise they seemed to die, and their departure is taken for misery, and their going from us to be utter destruction; but they are in peace. For though they be



punished in the sight of men, yet is their hope full of immortality. And having been a little chastised they shall be greatly rewarded, for God has proved them and found them worthy of himself. As gold in the furnace hath he tried them; and received them as a burnt-offering. In the time of their visitation they shall shine and kindle a conflagration, as sparks among the dry straw. They shall judge the nations and have dominion over the people, and their Lord shall reign forever" (Wisdom of Solomon iii. 1-8).

"But the ungodly shall be punished according to their own imaginations, who have neglected the righteous and forsaken the Lord. He shall rend them and cast them down headlong that they shall be speechless; and he shall shake them from their foundation, and they shall be utterly laid waste and be in sorrow, and their memorial shall perish. Then shall the righteous man stand in great boldness before the face of such as have afflicted him and made no account of his labors.

"When the wicked see it they shall be troubled with terrible fear, and shall be amazed at the greatness of his salvation. Repenting and groaning in spirit they shall say, This is he whom we once derided. We fools accounted his life madness and his end without honor. But now is he numbered among the children of God, and his lot is among the saints." Then they lament over the extreme brevity and worthlessness of worldly joys. They are like dust blown away by the wind, like the foam of the ocean scattered by the storm, like smoke dissipated by a tempest. The writer then proceeds:

"But the righteous live for evermore; their reward also is with the Lord, and the care of them is with the Most High. Therefore shall they receive a glorious kingdom

and a beautiful crown from the Lord's hand" (iii. 10; iv. 19; v. 2-5, 15, 16).

Retribution on the wicked is then described in sublime, figurative language.

The right-aiming thunderbolts shall fly to the mark. Hailstones of wrath shall fall. Floods and tempests shall sweep them away.

Can anything be more explicit than this vivid account of a future life and future retributions? Indeed, the beautiful expression "a hope full of immortality" has been transferred from this passage to the religious language of Christendom. On the points of modern controversy such as the literal eternity of punishment, or the annihilation of the wicked, the language is not explicit. Of this we shall say more. But as to a glorious reward of the righteous, and a fearful punishment of the wicked in the world to come, the testimony is unequivocal.

## CHAPTER III.

### *CHARACTER AND HISTORIC DOCUMENTS OF THE AGE OF THE MACCABEES.*

WE have ascended the chosen mountain-top of thought. We have seen, in the Maccabean age, the full and vivid development of the doctrine of the resurrection, and of the retributions of a future life. Standing on this mount of vision, let us survey the present, the past, and the future. Let us inquire whence came these clear and sublime views of a future life? Who were these men and these women who thus anticipated the martyr-spirit of the Christian age? What were their habits of thought? What their books and historical documents? What the character of the age? In short, what means have we of reproducing, in sympathetic forms, the opinions, feelings, and acts, of the men of that age? We do not feel content with dry dates, or the skeletons of heartless abstractions. We desire to meet them heart to heart, and to sympathize with them in the great conflicts, physical, intellectual, and moral, in which they were called to engage. Nor is it from mere curiosity that we desire this investigation. It is indispensable to a thorough historical presentation of the great question which we have undertaken to consider.

#### ANTECEDENT RELATIONS.

For want of it, the history of the doctrine of retribution in the early Christian ages has been presented without



a proper regard to its antecedent relations. In the most common histories of doctrines, such as those of Hagenbach, Neander, and Shedd, the subject is treated as if Christ were the fountain-head of the doctrine of future eternal retributions, and as though the history of opinions on this subject properly begins with him.

But the fact is that, in the three centuries preceding Christ, nearly or quite every form of the doctrine of future retribution had been developed that was promulgated and defended after Christ.

#### LEADING FORMS OF DOCTRINE.

The three leading forms promulgated among the early Christians were—1. The eternal blessedness of the righteous and the eternal punishment of the wicked. 2. The eternal blessedness of the righteous and the annihilation of the wicked. 3. The eternal blessedness of the righteous and the limited remedial punishment of the wicked, resulting in the final restoration to holiness of all fallen beings, and the unity and harmony of the universe in God. Every one of these doctrines of retribution had been held and defended before Christ came, by the Jews or among them.

In addition to these, in the early Christian ages the doctrine was promulgated of a conflict between two eternal and self-existent gods; one good, the other evil, each creating a system of his own—a conflict which involved in its issues the eternal duration of evil; though good was, on the whole, to be victorious in the conflict. This view, though promulgated by men claiming the Christian name, was generally regarded as extra-Christian and heretical. This view also had been promulgated in the centuries before Christ, and had come in contact with the Jews. Hence

it is clear that the influence of these preceding centuries must have been deeply felt in all the early Christian discussions of the doctrine of retribution. It was, in fact, so felt.

#### CHARACTER OF THE CENTURIES BEFORE CHRIST.

It has also been supposed that the centuries immediately preceding Christ were centuries of relative darkness, since prophecy and revelation ceased soon after the return from captivity, four hundred years before Christ, and in the interval the most important works of a literary kind produced by the Jews were those books entitled *Apocryphal*, and which by Protestants generally have been undervalued, if not contemned, under that title. Though intelligent Romanists esteem them more highly as a kind of Deutero-canonical books, yet the masses for the most part do not popularly appreciate them or the centuries during which they were written.

And yet the five centuries preceding Christ are some of the most remarkable centuries in the history of man, and most highly distinguished for an intense and widespread mental activity, in which the Jews participated, especially those at Alexandria.

#### PHILOSOPHERS, HISTORIANS, POETS.

In these centuries flourished such philosophers as Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle, and also, except Homer, the leading poets and historians of Greece. In the same centuries the great luminaries of Rome arose, in whose light we still walk in our classical studies, such as Cicero, Horace, Virgil, and Livy. In these centuries was the great scientific and literary development of Alexandria under the Ptolemies. In this development the language of Greece

took the lead, and the fact that the Jewish writings called *Apocryphal* are in Greek, and not, like the Old Testament, in Hebrew, is a result of that wonderful providence of God, by which the language of the Greek Testament was prepared.

#### ALEXANDRIA A GREAT CENTRE.

When Alexander founded Alexandria he created not only a great centre of political power, commerce, and wealth, but of literary and scientific development.

#### THE MUSEUM.

What was called the Museum was, in fact, a great royal university. "To it" (says Draper), "as to a centre, philosophers from all parts of the world converged. It is said that at one time not fewer than fourteen thousand students were assembled there." In it were established two great libraries, which together contained 700,000 volumes. Here grammar and criticism were developed. Here the inductive sciences were cultivated under the lead of Aristotle. Here the world-famed Geometry of Euclid was composed. From this school came such mathematicians, astronomers, and geographers, as Apollonius and Eratosthenes. Its influences extended to Archimedes and Hipparchus. Draper says: "Astronomical observatories, chemical laboratories, libraries, dissecting-houses, were not in vain. There went forth from them a spirit powerful enough to tincture all future time." In short, the intellectual activity of the Old World came to its highest development in the five centuries before Christ. In this respect he came in the fullness of time.

#### THE BIBLE IN GREEK.

In the providence of God, the Jews and their sacred books were brought into the very centre of this great intel-

lectual movement. When the Ptolemies carried above 100,000 Jews into Egypt they at once felt the power of the surrounding mental excitement, and studied the language, history, and philosophy, of the Greeks. As a result the Hebrew Scriptures were translated into Greek, and thus prepared for universal circulation. Thus, too, the Alexandrine or Hebraizing Greek of the New Testament was formed.

## CELEBRATED JEWS.

From this great movement came Philo, the celebrated Jewish commentator on Moses, whose works exerted a world-wide influence both in the Church and out of it; and Josephus, the eminent and well-known Jewish historian. Both of these lived near the time of Christ, yet they were not formed under his influence, but under that of the preceding ages.

## THE APOCRYPHA.

What, then, are the writings commonly called *Apocryphal*? They are mainly historical and ethical compositions of Jews, to whom the Old Testament was the supreme standard of religious truth. Besides these there were works of religious fiction, intended to develop religious and patriotic enthusiasm for the institutions of the Jews.

At the same time they were under the influence of ideas which of necessity had come in through the thinking of the Egyptians, Babylonians, Persians, and Greeks, to whom their nation was subjected in successive centuries. Hence, in view of the relations of the events of those ages to the future of Christianity, these writings are of great value and profound interest.

## APOCALYPTIC LITERATURE.

The same is true of the literature of those ages not

commonly called Apocryphal, but rather Apocalyptic; such as the early parts of the Sibylline Oracles, the book of Enoch, the Fourth Book of Ezra, and the like. Indeed, in these are the most complete statements of the views then held among the Jews of the system revealed in the Old Testament, in its future development and final retributions. Thus in the book of Enoch there is a very full development of the rewards of the holy, and the final punishment of the wicked, as conceived of at that time by a Jew.

#### PREJUDICE REMOVED.

I am aware that a prejudice is felt against such apocalyptic works, on account of the moral element involved in the false assumption that they were written by the authors whose names they bear; as, for example, Enoch, or the Sybil. But without entering into that question, it is enough to say that it does not affect their value for the purpose now contemplated, that is, the throwing of light on the thinking and feeling of the age of their composition. This may be illustrated by a modern example. In Milton's "Paradise Lost," the angel Michael is represented as giving to Adam a long and tolerably minute prophetic outline of the destinies of his descendants. It is in form a prophecy; it is in fact a statement of history up to the days of Milton from his theological standpoint. To this is added Milton's view of the future destinies of mankind, as coming from the lips of the angel. As a prophecy all this is of no worth, but it is of great value as throwing light on the opinions of Milton and of the great body of Christians of his age. In like manner the authors of these apocalyptic works represent the Sybil, or Enoch, or any other prophet, as predicting events according to what the writer held to be the true view. Regarded thus, they throw very

great light on the thinking and feeling of the age in which they were written. In these works, too, is found a very wide range of thought and great mental activity.

## PHARISEES AND SADDUCEES.

It adds a new interest to this age of the Maccabees to know that in it are the roots of the two great parties of the Pharisees and Sadducees, whose opinions on future retribution are so prominently presented in the New Testament. The Pharisees honorably represented at the outset those whose firm faith in the resurrection and the rewards of a future life sustained them in the great persecution. They truly represented the main body of the Jews, and they were zealous defenders of the law of Moses, but it was as encompassed with the traditions of the Fathers. The Sadducees, on the other hand, represented the Epicureanism that rejected the retributions of a future life, and they repudiated all efforts to introduce into the law of Moses by tradition what was not there in express statement.

## THE ZEND-AVESTA.

To the sources of information already noticed we may add the Zend-Avesta and the recent learned investigations into the system of Zoroaster by German, French, English, and American scholars. The question how far, if at all, what is regarded as the Christian doctrine of the future life and of retribution has been derived from the system of Zoroaster cannot be satisfactorily answered except by a thorough study of that system, and for this the materials and aids are more satisfactory and abundant than they ever have been before.

## THE MISHNA.

The Mishna is the first part of the Talmud, and is a

digest of Jewish observances and traditions. Its author, Rabbi Jehudah the Holy, a Jew, wealthy and influential, composed it toward the close of the second century. Yet it refers back to the decisions of Hillel and Shammai, who flourished before Christ; and also to those of Gamaliel, the teacher of Paul. It is therefore of great value in studying the progress of doctrinal opinion as well as practice among the Jews, even before Christ. On some points at issue we shall freely appeal to this authority.

## CHAPTER IV.

### *SOURCE OF JEWISH OPINIONS.*

WE have gained our point of vision, and from it have looked down on a broad and deep river of opinion flowing by us. We have seen that although the law of Moses was sustained by sanctions merely temporal, yet, under it, in the days of the Maccabees, there was a remarkable development of a mighty current of belief in a future life, in a resurrection of the body, and in eternal retributions. This river of opinion was broad and deep, and carried a nation in its current. It was derived from no abstract and unpractical speculations of philosophy, adapted only for the few. It flowed from simple and intense faith in God and his Word. It was a belief popular and powerful enough to rally a nation, and to sustain them in the intense struggles of a fierce and bloody religious war, and conduct them to victory and independence.

From this point of vision we are now to cast our eyes backward, and to trace this river of opinion to its sources.

#### TWO OPINIONS POSSIBLE.

As to these sources, two opinions are supposable. One, that the fountain-heads of the river are found in great events in the history of the Jewish nation and their ancestors, in their covenant relations to God, and in the habits of communion with him that distinguished their great



leaders, rulers, and teachers, during the course of centuries.

Another view is that this river took its rise either in Egypt, or Persia, or Greece. But as the doctrine of the resurrection was not found in Egypt or in Greece, and as Greek philosophy was specially antagonistic to it, and as the doctrine of the resurrection of the body was a prominent element in the Persian theology, as set forth by Zoroaster, the great river which we have seen is traced back to its fountain-heads in Persia.

If any one would see an argument for this view set forth with great zeal and affluence of historic lore, he will find it in Mr. Alger's learned work on a future life. He will find, at the same time, a very radical presentation of this view. Mr. Alger does not believe that the resurrection is a part of the true system of a future life as taught by Christ. Yet he concedes that it was taught by Paul and other writers of the New Testament. But they had not yet been freed from the errors of Pharisaic teaching which had been corrupted by the Zoroastrian error of the resurrection as well as by other errors. By this erroneous teaching of the writers of the New Testament the Apostolic Church was led to adopt these errors of the Persianized-Pharisaic theology, and they have come down even to this age, and have pervaded the whole Church. Moreover, to eliminate them from true Christianity is the great work of the present age. In this work Mr. Alger has engaged with great zeal.

Those who have seen the Mississippi after the Missouri has entered it will have a striking illustration of Christianity after this Persian theology has entered it as represented by Mr. Alger. Before the Missouri enters, the Mississippi flows clear, pure, and tranquil; after it enters, the whole

aspect of the river is changed. It is turbid with mud, and rushes with a fierce current, boiling, struggling, and almost frantic, in its downward course. As the Mississippi is entirely revolutionized by the Missouri, so (according to Mr. Alger) has Christianity been entirely revolutionized by the influx of this river of Persian-Zoroastrian theology.

#### THE TRUE VIEW.

We do not adopt this view. We rather adopt the view first stated, that the river that we saw from our point of vision rose from the mountain-summits of God, in his providence and in his revealed Word. For this belief we propose to give historic reasons.

#### PERSIAN THEOLOGY.

But, before proceeding to do it, we shall say a few words on some points of this Persian theology. We shall not attempt to unfold the system as a whole. It will suffice for our present purpose to mention three noticeable points in which this Zoroastrian system is the earliest on record in developing certain modes of thinking as to retribution, which have since appeared in various forms in the Church.

We refer to a doctrine of the purification and resurrection of wicked men after the judgment-day, also to a doctrine of the annihilation of some of the wicked—that is, wicked spirits—and, finally, to a doctrine of prayer for the dead.

The doctrine of the purification and restitution of the wicked was afterward stated, but on very different grounds, by Origen, at Alexandria; and on still different grounds, subsequently, by Theodore of Mopsuestia, as we shall show hereafter.

The doctrine of annihilation in the system of Zoroaster is limited to Ahriman, and wicked spirits created by him. Afterward, a doctrine of annihilation was applied by Philo, and then by Irenæus and others, to sinful men.

The doctrine of prayer for the dead is an important part of the Zoroastrian system. The twelfth Fargard of the Vendidad is almost entirely occupied in directions as to the prayers to be offered when any relatives of various degrees die. Twice as many prayers are enjoined for those who had died in sin as for the pure, and certain seasons of the year were regarded as times of special prayer and of peculiar success in the delivery of the souls of the dead from punishment.

#### JEWISH PRAYERS FOR THE DEAD.

Nothing of this kind is prescribed in the Bible, and the first recorded instance of its being done by those who regarded the Bible as their supreme authority is found in the Maccabean war of independence. After a victory of Judas Maccabeus over Gorgias, they found, on burying the dead, under the coats of every one that was slain, things consecrated to idols, and saw that for this cause they were slain. The historian then proceeds: "All men, therefore, praising the Lord, the righteous Judge, who had opened the things that were hid, betook themselves unto prayer, and besought him that the sin committed might be wholly blotted out. Moreover, the noble Judas exhorted the multitude to keep themselves free from sin, since they saw so manifestly the disastrous consequences of the sins of those who were slain. Moreover, he made a collection throughout his army, amounting to two thousand drachms of silver, and sent it to Jerusalem, to offer a sin-offering for them. In this he acted well and reverentially, in that he

had respect unto the resurrection. For if he had not hoped that those who were slain would rise again, it would have been vain and profitless to pray for the dead. He also thus indicated his belief that glorious rewards were laid up for those who died a godly death. It was a holy and reverent thought. Wherefore, he made a propitiation for the dead, that they might be redeemed from their sins" (2 Macc. xii. 36-45).

Even in this case, we do not affirm that the noble Judas Maccabeus was, of course, under the influence of Persian theology. Believing firmly, with his whole army, in a future life and in a coming resurrection, he could not endure the thought that any who had died in battle for their country should perish; and, therefore, he and his army resorted to prayer and propitiation in behalf of the slain. In our more advanced age, and during our civil war, it seemed to be assumed by perhaps the majority, that all who died fighting for their country would go to heaven, of course. They seemed to regard it as the ancient Church did—a baptism of blood in the case of martyrs. Of course, there was no resort to prayer and propitiation, as in the army of Judas Maccabeus, in a less enlightened age.

#### ANNIHILATION OF AHRIMAN, AND PURIFICATION OF WICKED MEN.

We have stated it as the Zoroastrian doctrine that Ahri-man and his evil spirits are to be annihilated, and that sinful men are to be purified and restored, after adequate punishment.

#### SCHOLARS DIFFER.

We are aware that there seems to be some diversity of opinion on both these points among scholars. Prof. Whitney, in the article on the Avesta, in his "Oriental and

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 Linguistic Studies," p. 186, says that the good are supposed by the Zoroastrians to go to the paradise of the holy and benevolent gods. "The souls of the unbelieving and the evil-doers, however, were not deemed worthy of that blessedness, and were thought, so it seemed, to be destroyed with the body." So eminent a scholar would not say this without some evidence, to himself, at least, of its truth. But we have been unable to find any such evidence, and there seems to be decided proof, which we shall soon adduce, that the ultimate purification and restoration of wicked men was the real Zoroastrian doctrine.

In like manner we found Mr. Alger and J. F. Clarke asserting, in the strongest terms, the final purification and restoration of Ahriman, the great centre and head of evil. We were quite interested in this as a seeming anticipation of Origen's doctrine of the ultimate conversion and restoration of the devil. But, on looking for evidence of the truth of the statement, we were unable to find any; and, on the other hand, we found, in the supreme authority, decisive statements affirming his annihilation with his angels.

#### THE AVESTA.

The Avesta, as translated by Spiegel, contains the doctrine of the resurrection, and of the ultimate purification of all men. But it decisively represents Ahriman and his evil spirits as annihilated. In the Khordah-Avesta, *Patet Erani* 1st, this profession is made: "I am wholly without doubt in the coming of the resurrection of the later body, in an invariable recompense of good deeds and their reward, and of bad deeds and their punishment, as well as in the continuance of Paradise, in the annihilation of hell and Ahriman and the Devas; that the god Ormuzd will at last be victorious, and Ahriman will perish, together with the

Devas and the offshoots of darkness (Spiegel, vol. iii., p. 163). In the Khordah-Avesta, *Nanmetaisnè* 7th, occurs this doxology: "Praise to the Overseer, the Lord who rewards those whō accomplish good deeds according to his own wish, purifies, at last, the obedient, and at last purifies even the wicked out of hell" (Spiegel, vol. iii., p. 15). This passage, as quoted by J. F. Clarke, in his work on "The Ten Great Religions," would lead to the conclusion that even Ahriman himself was to be purified out of hell, and not annihilated, as is elsewhere stated. But this is owing to a singular error in quotation. In every other case he quotes Bleek's translation of Spiegel exactly. In this case he quotes him (p. 190) as translating thus: "who purifies even the wicked one of hell," instead of "who purifies even the wicked out of hell." "The wicked one of hell" is of course Ahriman, who is elsewhere said to be annihilated. I am aware that this doctrine of the purification of the wicked out of hell is not found in the oldest portions of the Avesta, but in those parts of the Khordah-Avesta which are not in the Avestan dialect, but in Parsee, and were, as Spiegel states (vol. iii., p. 2), written in a comparatively modern period.

The doctrine of the resurrection, however, occurs in the older portions of the Avesta, if those parts that teach it are not interpolations, as some suggest. But there is, on the whole, good reason to believe that these portions are genuine, and that the doctrine of the resurrection was an early, if not an original, part of the system of Zoroaster. The purification of the wicked out of hell was also probably introduced very early into the system.

man, follows Rhode, who relies on the Bundeshesh and the later writings of the Parsees. The same seems to be true of Mr. Alger. In order to ascertain whether the Bundeshesh does thus contradict the Avesta, I requested Prof. Abbott, of Cambridge, to consult the most recent authorities on the point. From his reply to me I take the following statements, which seem to be decisive.

PROFESSOR ABBOTT'S STATEMENTS.

"The statement that the Bundeshesh teaches the final conversion or purification of Ahriman (Angro Mainyus) is founded, I believe, solely on the translation of Anquetil du Perron, afterward Germanized by Kleuker. The doctrine does not appear in the translations of Spiegel and Windischman, whose authority is, of course, much higher than that of Anquetil. Those who have maintained the *conversion* of Ahriman as a Zoroastrian doctrine have relied mainly on Rhode, who, in addition to the Bundeshesh, cites the *Yasna* (*Izeschne*, in Anquetil and Kleuker). But this proof disappears in Spiegel's translation. Nor is there any proof of it in the *Zemyad Yasht* (*Yasht*, xix., *Khordah-Avesta*, xxxv.), to which Miss Cobbe refers. In the Sadder Bundeshesh, the annihilation of Ahriman is expressly taught in connection with the doctrine of the redemption of the wicked from hell, after long and severe punishment." These statements are all decisively sustained by quotations from Windischman and Spiegel, which we have not room to introduce.

THE CONCLUSION.

The positive statements of the Avesta must, therefore, stand uncontradicted by the Bundeshesh, as the true Zoroastrian doctrine. Wicked men are at last to be purified out

of hell; Ahriman and his angels are to be finally annihilated.

We shall make other statements as to the theology of Zoroaster as we proceed, to prove that the Jewish system which we have set forth did not originate in Persia, but was the natural development and result of (1) great facts in the history of the Jews, and of (2) the peculiar and unexampled habits of their leaders of communion with God, and of (3) the covenant relations of the Jews and their ancestors to God.



## CHAPTER V.

### *JEWISH ORIGIN OF THE DOCTRINE OF FUTURE RETRIBUTION.*

STANDING at our point of vision, in the age of the **Maccabees**, we have seen a great river of belief and emotion as to the retributions of a future life flowing by us. It is not, however, merely belief in a future life and future retributions, but still more specifically in a resurrection of the body. We have also considered an effort to find the great fountain-heads of this river in Persia, and not in Judea. This view we have declined to accept. We are willing to concede that not only the Persians, but also the Egyptians and the Greeks, did exert an influence on Jewish thought and belief. Of what kind it was, and to what degree exerted, will be considered elsewhere. But that the original, main, deep current of thought and belief as to a future life and its retributions originated with any of these nations, there is no good reason to believe.

On the other hand, there is decisive evidence that it originated from the divine system disclosed in the Old Testament, and the beginnings of which long preceded the law of Moses.

#### HISTORICAL POSITIONS.

In opposition to the theory of Persian origin, we lay down these historical positions:

1. The idea of a future life and of its retributions is

wrought, in the most impressive manner, into the fundamental history of the Old Testament, a history ever before the mind of the Jews, while that of Persia was remote and unknown.

2. The belief in a future life and its retributions is implied and assumed in the covenant with Abraham and his descendants, which preceded the law of Moses by four hundred and thirty years.

3. This belief was cherished and avowed by the patriarchs before they went down to Egypt, and in Egypt. Moses also in Egypt cherished the same.

4. This belief was clearly and fully developed in the religious experience recorded in the book of Psalms, long before the Jews had come in contact with the Persians.

5. The covenant with the patriarchs as to their personal possession of the land of Canaan was such as to suggest to them the doctrine of the resurrection.

6. The most ancient and influential Jewish Rabbis, and among them Gamaliel, the teacher of Paul, positively and decidedly assert that the doctrine of the resurrection did arise from this source, thus, in effect, positively denying its Persian origin.

7. The doctrine was taught in the book of Psalms, and by Isaiah and Hosea, before the Jews came in contact with the Persians, as well as by Daniel, after the captivity in Babylon.

8. The tendency of the Jews in all ages to necromancy, and the need of laws against it even in the time of Moses, is decisive proof of the popular belief of the survival and activity of the soul, and, of course, of a life after death and its retributions.

The most interesting part of this array of historical positions, and perhaps as conclusive and unanswerable as any,

is found in the first great fact, that the idea of a future life, and of its retributions, is wrought in the most impressive manner into the history of the Old Testament.

#### POWER OF THE TEACHING OF FACTS.

Doctrines are never so powerful to affect the popular mind as when embodied in some great historical event. Thus the doctrine of the resurrection was invested with an all-pervading popular power when embodied in the resurrection of Christ.

Was there, then, any embodying of the doctrine of a future life and its rewards in any great act by which the popular mind could be affected under the Old Testament dispensation? There was.

#### INFLUENCE ON THE MACCABEES.

And this great act is invested with peculiar interest by the certainty with which we are assured that it was a main element in kindling the hope of eternal life in the minds of the Maccabees themselves, in the very crisis of their struggle against Antiochus Epiphanes.

There is not perhaps in history a more interesting scene than the death-bed of Mattathias, the father of the Maccabees. No scene more deserves the highest efforts of an inspired painter.

Mattathias began in Modin, single-handed, the war for the law of God against the king. Fired with zeal, he slew the king's officer, who was endeavoring to enforce the offering of sacrifice to the gods of Greece. Then he fled to the mountains with his sons, and rallied to his standard all who were true to the law of God from all the land of Judea. His followers at first were few and heroic. But he led them to victory, and emboldened and aroused the

nation. But the infirmities of age were upon him, and death drew near. Then, upon his death-bed, he gathered around him his sons, and nominated the hero Judas Macabees to take his place, and delivered a parting address, in which he endeavored to embolden his sons by holding up before them the great heroes of Jewish history.

## TRANSLATION OF ELIJAH.

But among them all there was no one whose example seemed so much to inspire him as that of the great prophet Elijah, who, like him, had periled his life in defending the law of God against an idolatrous king and queen. This example, with glowing words, he held up before his sons, and with it the glorious reward of his fidelity. He says (1 Mac. ~~xlvi. 61~~), after mentioning other heroes, "consider that Elijah, for being zealous and fervent for the law, was taken up into heaven." In effect, he says: Remember the great prophet Elijah. Remember his zeal for the law of God in the face of danger and death, and remember his reward. He was taken up even into heaven, into the presence of God. Doubt not, then, that eternal life is in reserve for you, if you, in like manner, are faithful to God and to his law. ii. 32

## THE POPULAR VIEW.

That this view of that great event was not peculiar to him is plain from the manner in which the son of Sirach thus apostrophizes the great prophet (Ecc. xlviii. 4, 9, 11): "How wast thou glorified, O Elijah, in thy wondrous deeds, who wast taken up in a whirlwind of fire and in a chariot of fiery horses! Blessed are we who behold thee, and are adorned with love, for we too shall surely live." That this was the popular view of the case is perfectly

plain from these facts, and thus we come at least to one fountain-head of that river of belief and emotion which we are endeavoring to trace upward to its sources. We find it flowing not from Persia, but from the mountains of Judea, where Elijah was very zealous for the law of God, and as a reward was taken up to heaven.

#### TRANSLATION OF ENOCH.

But this is not the highest source of the river. There is still another in times still more remote, and before Persia had ever been heard of. A similar transaction is recorded, even before the flood, in the case of the great prophet Enoch. An inspired writer makes his case the centre of the great doctrine of retribution (Heb. xi. 5, 6).

#### THE SEPTUAGINT VERSION.

But before we advert to his remarks it is necessary to give the Septuagint version of the passage upon which they are based (Gen. v. 24). Our translation is this: "Enoch walked with God and he was not; for God took him." Of this the Septuagint translation is, "Enoch *pleased God*, and was not found, for God translated him." So, also, where our translation says, "Enoch walked with God three hundred years," the Septuagint translators say, "Enoch *pleased God three hundred years*." This is no doubt, in essence, the same idea as is implied in walking with God, but to see the full force of the words of the inspired writer we must have before us the very words of the translation to which he was appealing. Looking at and using this version he thus speaks when properly translated: "By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death, and was not found, because God had translated him; for he had this testimony, that before his translation he pleased God. But

without faith it is impossible to please him; for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." The translation of the Septuagint was made under the early Ptolemies, long before the days of the Maccabees, and is an unanswerable proof of the manner in which the account of the translation of Enoch was then regarded by the Jews. The translation of Enoch is also referred to in the Wisdom of Solomon, as a reward for his pleasing God (iv. 10, 11). "He pleased God, and was beloved of him, so that living among sinners he was translated."

## THE FOUNTAIN-HEAD.

This great event, then, occurring before the flood, has shone as a light through the ages, disclosing the real existence of the spirit-world, and of a life with God with its retributions beyond the present. This great event, like the sun, has shone through each succeeding generation, and in the days of the Maccabees it was appealed to as a proof of a future life and its retributions, in the same way in which the translation of Elijah was appealed to, as we have seen. Indeed, no character of the Old Testament seems more powerfully to have affected the Jewish mind and imagination in every age than Enoch. He was regarded as an eminently holy man, taken into the immediate counsels of God, and as, therefore, the fittest person to unfold the destinies of coming ages.

## THE BOOK OF ENOCH.

Upon this conception the book of Enoch is based. There is no reason to doubt that this book contains many of the traditions of past ages as to this great prophet. One of these traditions is quoted in common by the apostle

Jude and the author of the book of Enoch, unless we prefer to regard the apostle as quoting and sanctioning a part of that book. Certainly the prophecy occurs in the book of Enoch substantially as it is reported by Jude. "Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied, saying, Behold the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them, of all their ungodly deeds which they have committed against God, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him."

We have not time now to speak at length of the important and deeply-interesting contents of the book of Enoch. That it was written long before Christ, by a Jew, and that it was extensively read and exerted great influence among the Jews, are the important facts of the case. Thus viewed, one thing it makes sure, that the river of Jewish belief as to a future life and its retributions did not originate in Persia, but in the earliest narratives of the Mosaic record. This the whole book, full of eternal retributions, clearly proves.

#### MAGNITUDE OF THESE EVENTS.

Let us now pause and reflect. No one, we suppose, will deny that, next after Moses, the prophet Elijah is the greatest and most impressive character of the Old Testament record. Nowhere are there such brilliant and intense lights and shades as in his history. The scene on Carmel, when he stood up alone for God against the three hundred prophets of Baal, and called down fire from heaven to testify for God, and to turn back the people to his service, has never been exceeded in grandeur, sublimity, and thrilling power. Of the place occupied in the mind of the Jewish nation by Enoch, we have already spoken. These

two great men had probably never heard of Persia, and in their days Persia had no connection whatever with the Jews. And yet the idea of a future life and of its retributions is wrought in the most impressive manner into their lives, and thus into the fundamental history of the Old Testament, a history ever before the mind of the Jews, while that of Persia was remote and unknown.

## DENIAL BY MR. ALGER.

We are aware that Mr. Alger earnestly insists that these narrations do not teach what they are supposed to teach. But it is a manifest historical fact, as we have shown, that the Jews did so understand them, and that is sufficient for our purpose ; we have historically traced their opinions to their real sources, even if the Jews erred in their philology. But they did not err. The more thoroughly these records are studied, the clearer will it become that the Jews truly understood them, and that they really teach what they have ever held them to teach. To the Jewish writers already quoted may also be added Philo, the distinguished commentator on the books of Moses. In his questions on Genesis, he derives from this passage the doctrine of the immortality of the soul, of the reward of Enoch for a holy life, and of his translation to live and act in the spirit-world. From this reward of Enoch for a holy life, from which he never receded, Philo derives encouragement for the good, in all ages, to expect divine rewards in the life to come.

## THE PATRIARCHS AND MOSES.

The case of the patriarchs and of Moses next demands our consideration. So far as they are concerned, no connection with Persia can be alleged. Their relations to



Egypt, however, will deserve careful consideration, for, among the Egyptians, ideas of a future state and its retributions were fully developed. We shall make it plain, however, that they did not adopt the Egyptian system, but that, nevertheless, they were excited and stimulated by it to develop such a system of a future life and its rewards as would grow naturally out of their own covenant with the God of the Bible.

For we must never forget that the great covenant of God was formed with Abraham and his posterity long before they went down into Egypt. The promise of a land and of a posterity, in whom all future ages and all the families of the earth should be blessed, had been made to them. And Christ assures us that Abraham looked forward to his day with peculiar joy. The character of the one God, the Holy One, the Creator of all things, acting on an eternal plan, had been fully revealed to them. From this we shall find that they did not recede, but developed their ideas of future rewards beyond this life in accordance with this plan. The ideas of the Egyptians on future retributions, as we shall see, did not corrupt them, but rather stimulated them more fully to develop their own system.

## CHAPTER VI.

### *VIEWS OF THE PATRIARCHS AND OF MOSES.*

It is worthy of notice that during the long period from Abraham to David, and the composition of the book of Psalms, there is but little record of experimental communion with God, or of the hope of immortality with him. Experience of this kind, as we shall see, becomes abundant in the book of Psalms. Are we to suppose that there was no such experience in the patriarchal ages, or only that it was unrecorded?

#### CAUSES OF THE DOCTRINE OF IMMORTALITY.

The causes that produced the experience of the book of Psalms we certainly do find in the patriarchal ages. Take the case of Abraham. Here we find the revelation of God to him as a personal God, and intimate confidential communication between them. We find a plan organized to bless all the nations of the earth through him and his seed. A system is organized for the ages. A covenant is formed including him and his seed. God says to him, "I am thy shield and exceeding great reward." As a means of executing this plan a land was pledged as the centre of operations. Isaac and Jacob were taken into the same covenant. Nor was the great plan confined to this world and to man. An angelic world of heavenly spirits in fellow-

ship with God, and his messengers and ministers in carrying out this plan, was also revealed. This idea was developed in peculiar sublimity when there was presented to Jacob a ladder reaching up to heaven, on which the angels of God were ascending and descending, and at the top of which God stood and renewed his covenant with him. It is plain that men with whom God thus covenanted in a plan for eternal ages, must have regarded themselves as immortal, and partakers with God in that plan, and not as the perishing creatures of a few years. The immortality of God, and their union with him in a plan for eternal ages, must have given them an assurance of their own immortality. Lange is right when he says that such a covenant for the ages, by a personal God, with the pious, contains in itself the assumption of their immortality, and that this is just as distinct an assumption in the Old Testament as the being of God.

#### CASE OF MOSES.

This argument applies with even greater force to the case of Moses. How intimate, how various was his communion with God! How glorious, how wonderful, how unsurpassed, was the revelation of the divine character made by God to him at his request! How vast the plans for all coming ages in which he was associated as a fellow-laborer with God! How vividly did he anticipate his great antitype—the prophet like unto himself! Is it possible that he did not expect to live with God to see the consummation of these plans?

#### CASE OF ABRAHAM.

Nor were such previsions of Christ confined to Moses. That Abraham took enlarged views of the plans of God in Christ, our Saviour assures us. He said to the Jews,

“Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day, and he saw it, and was glad.”

## EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS.

The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews also assures us that the minds of the patriarchs did not rest merely on temporal rewards. Of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, he says: “These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a heavenly fatherland. And truly if they were thinking of that fatherland whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to return to it; but now they desire a better fatherland, that is a heavenly, wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for he hath prepared for them a city.” Of Moses, he says, that he endured as seeing him who is invisible, and that he had respect unto the future recompense of the reward, and therefore refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season, esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt. Moses, it seems, even in Egypt, had a view of the day of Christ in the future, and bore reproach for his sake.

## OBJECTIONS TO THE EPISTLE, AND REPLY.

But there are those who regard these statements as not historical, but only as the opinions of the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, whoever he was. But even those who make light of the historical or inspired authority of this epistle, cannot deny that it represents the opinions of

a learned and eloquent Jew, perhaps Apollos, if not Paul, on this historical question. Nor can they deny that Philo also, the most learned Jew of the age of Christ, represents Moses and the patriarchs as acting with reference to the retributions of a future life. For the present, then, leaving out of view the question of inspiration, we allege that there are other historical facts which render this view not only credible, but even necessary to account for the course of events.

#### HISTORICAL FACTS.

The facts are these: The posterity of Abraham, when they went down to Egypt, for a residence of centuries, encountered there a system of future retribution which was popular, and all-pervading in its influence. It was also adapted, unless it was resisted by the influence of another system, firmly and intelligently held, to bring the children of Israel under its control. But its influence was resisted. Though Joseph was married to Asenath, daughter of the priest of On; though Moses, as the son of Pharaoh's daughter, was educated in the highest schools of the Egyptians, and was learned in all their wisdom, yet they did not adopt their system of theology, nor of future retribution. To understand the full force of the system to be resisted, and its influence on the popular mind, let the following statements of Wilkinson, which could be greatly enlarged by similar testimony, be thoughtfully considered.

#### EGYPTIAN SYSTEM OF IMMORTALITY.

"The great care of the Egyptians was directed to their condition after death, that last stage toward which their present life was only *the pilgrimage*; and they were taught to consider their abode here merely as an inn upon the road. They looked forward to being received into the

company of that being who represented the divine goodness, if pronounced worthy at the great judgment-day; and the privilege of being called by his name was the fulfillment of all their wishes. Every one was then the same; all were equally noble; there was no distinction of rank beyond the tomb; and, though their actions might be remembered on earth with gratitude and esteem, no king or conqueror was greater than the humblest man after death; nor were any honors given to them as heroes."

We call particular attention to the statement that among the Egyptians this present life was regarded as merely a *pilgrimage* to a better country, and that they were taught to consider their abode here as merely an inn upon the road. Now, if the pious Israelites were acting in view of a future life, growing out of their own views of the God of their fathers, the Creator of all things, then they too could, from their own point of vision, look on this present life as a pilgrimage, and a heavenly country as their home. And if, when this was the current use of language, they so spoke of this life, it is fair to ascribe to their language the meaning which it would then receive.

## STRANGERS AND PILGRIMS.

Fix your eye, then, on one of the most striking scenes recorded in the Old Testament, the introduction of Jacob to Pharaoh. Joseph, the son-in-law of the priest of On, brought in his father and set him before Pharaoh. The old patriarch then blessed the King of Egypt. "And Pharaoh said unto Jacob, How old art thou? And Jacob said unto Pharaoh, The days of the years of *my pilgrimage* are an hundred and thirty years. Few and evil have the days of the years of my life been, and have not attained unto the days of the years of the life of my fathers in the

days of their *pilgrimage*." Is it possible to doubt what this use of the word pilgrimage must have meant to Pharaoh and to Joseph, and to all the Egyptians? Was it not a distinct recognition of this life as a pilgrimage to a future country, a heavenly home? In the circumstances and in view of the usages of language at that time, could the words admit of any other meaning?

Now, the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews probably was better acquainted with these and similar facts than some of his modern critics. And he was perfectly justified in drawing from the language of the patriarchs the inferences that he did. He adverts first to the fact that they confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth, and from this he draws the conclusion that they were seeking a better country, even an heavenly. For we are to call to mind that Abraham also, for a considerable time, was a resident in Egypt, and on intimate terms with the reigning Pharaoh (*see* Gen. xii. 10-20). By such a residence in Egypt, in the very centre of Egyptian life and power, he must have been fully informed on the views of the Egyptians as to a future life, and of this life as a pilgrimage to a heavenly country.

#### EGYPTIAN FUNERALS.

Indeed, no one could reside in Egypt without seeing these views acted out in their funerals. Nothing was so prominent, nothing so influential in the lives of all classes of men in Egypt, from the king to the peasant, as the doctrine of future retributions. On this was based a judgment at death, not only of the common people, but of kings, in view of their past lives, and a presumptive sentence was passed on them with respect to their future destiny. The good were assigned to union with Osiris, the sinful but

corrigible to transmigration as a means of purification, the incorrigibly and hopelessly bad to endless punishment. All this was acted out in so public a manner that no one could remain ignorant of it. It penetrated to every family and every individual.

#### INFLUENCE ON THE ISRAELITES.

Now, the influence of such a system on the children of Israel must have been great in one respect. It must have compelled them to think of future retributions. How could Joseph, connected as he was with the priesthood, avoid it? How could Moses, with his princely education in the court of Pharaoh, avoid it? How could the Israelites at large avoid it?

Another thing is plain. They must have been drawn into the current of this system, if they had not been anchored by a system of their own, centred in a higher and truer doctrine of immortality and of retribution. For the human mind, as all history shows, tends in all nations to some doctrine of a future life and of future retribution. It is absurd to suppose that, with the subject forced on their attention on every side, such men as Joseph and Moses could have remained in a state of mere negation and ignorance on such a question. Hence, when the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews (xi. 25-27) represents Moses as enduring as seeing the invisible God, and acting in view of future retributions, he simply states what in the circumstances is indispensable to account for his conduct, and what of necessity must have been true.

#### THE COUNTERPOISE.

But it may be asked, "What was this system by which the Israelites in Egypt were anchored, and how did it take hold of future retributions?"



In reply to this we answer, it was the system growing out of the covenant of God with Abraham, which in its scope took in all men in all future ages. In Abraham and in his seed all the families of the earth in all future ages were to be blessed. Of the coming future Abraham must have taken enlarged views, since Christ himself assures us that he saw his day and was glad.

As a part of this system God gave to the patriarchs, personally, and to their seed, the land of Canaan. Before going down into Egypt, they had been prophetically warned of their bondage there and of their deliverance, and this God, this covenant, and these promises, held them, while in bondage, from drifting away into the polytheism of Egypt. Moses was educated by his mother to understand and to believe this system. Hence, also, Jacob refused to be buried in Egypt, and was buried by Joseph and his other sons in the land of promise. So, too, Joseph, before he died, said to his brethren: "I die; and God will surely visit you and bring you out of this land unto the land which he swore to Abraham and to Isaac and to Jacob. And he took an oath of the children of Israel, saying, God will surely visit you, and ye shall carry up my bones from hence" (Gen. l. 24, 25). These promises, anticipations, and hopes, were common to all the Israelites, and when the time came they were rallied by Moses to leave Egypt and march for the promised land, and the Egyptians were compelled by the terrific judgments of God to let them go.

#### INFLUENCE OF THE SYSTEM.

Now, from a system like this, extending through the ages, a logical inference is the immortality of those involved in it. This is not, indeed, capable of positive demonstration. But one thing is clear: the idea of an immortal God,

organizing a system for all coming ages, through the patriarchs and Moses, cannot be held with any consistency or dignity, except on the assumption of the immortality of the soul and a future life. If men perish in their generations, the system dies with them. There is nothing to connect the future with the past. Where but one generation exists at a time, the sympathy and coöperation of the ages cease, and the universe is comparatively an unsympathetic solitude. Upon such a future as this Abraham did not look when he rejoiced in view of the day of Christ, nor did Moses when he anticipated the coming of his antitype, the Great Prophet, like unto himself, and for him endured reproach. They lived in the future, and felt that the future was theirs. Christ sanctions this reasoning when he says (Luke xx. 38): "God is not a God of the dead, but of the living: for all live unto him."

## BELIEF OF THE RESURRECTION.

But this belief of immortality may assume two forms. It may, as in Greece, ignore the body at death, and hold to an immediate passage to an eternal spirit-world, or it may lead to a doctrine of the resurrection of the body, and a future life in a renewed body. That it assumed the latter form among the Jews is admitted by all. But it is asserted by Alger and others, as has been stated, that the idea came from Persia. On the other hand, it is asserted by the ancient Jews that the idea of a resurrection arose from the nature of the promises of God to the patriarchs, as to their personal possession of the promised land. It was promised, they said, not merely to the seed of the patriarchs, but to them personally, as well as to their seed. And yet, personally, they never inherited it. Of this fact the martyr Stephen thus speaks in his dying speech: "God gave

Abraham no inheritance in it, not so much as to set his foot on; yet he promised that he would give it to *him* for a possession, and to his seed after him" (Acts vii. 5). Hence the Jews came to the conclusion that, inasmuch as God would surely fulfill his promise, he would raise up Abraham and the other patriarchs, at the time of the coming of the Messiah, to inherit the land, with their descendants. In connection with this resurrection, they also looked for a renovation and restitution of all things. Whether these were fair inferences from the promises of God, is not now the question, but whether, in fact, the Jews so reasoned, and thus came to the doctrine of the resurrection. On this point there can be no doubt. Fairbairn also justifies this reasoning.

#### TESTIMONY OF THE JEWS.

Speaking of the belief that the patriarchs, personally, should inherit the promised land, he says: "No doubt such a belief implied that there must be a resurrection of the dead before the promise could be realized; and, to those who conceive immortality as altogether a blank page to the eye of an ancient Israelite, the idea may seem to carry its own refutation along with it. The rabbis, however, with all their blindness, seem to have had juster, because more Scriptural, notions of the truth and purposes of God in this respect."

He then quotes from the comment of the Talmud, in Gemara, on Ex. vi. 4, where God, speaking of Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, says, "I have established my covenant with *them* to give *them* the land of Canaan, the land of their pilgrimage, wherein they were strangers." Here it is noticeable that the patriarchs are spoken of personally, and not as joined with their seed. Here, also, the Talmud raises the question, "Where does the law teach the resur-

rection of the dead?" The distinct answer given is this: "In that place where it is said I have established my covenant with *thee*, to give *thee* the land of Canaan, for it is not said with *you*, but with *thee*." We are told also that when the Sadducees pressed Rabbi Gamaliel, the teacher of Paul, with the same question, he returned in substance the same answer. Menasseh Ben Israel states the argument still more fully: "God says to Abraham, I will give to thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger. But it appears that Abraham and the holy patriarchs did not possess that land; therefore it is of necessity that they should be raised up to enjoy the good promises; else the promises of God would be vain and false. So that we have here a proof, not only of the immortality of the soul, but also of the essential foundation of the law, the resurrection of the dead." After making these quotations, Fairbairn remarks: "It is not surely too much to suppose that what Jewish rabbis could so certainly draw from the Word of God may have been perceived by wise and holy patriarchs. Indeed, the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, not that of the mere immortality of the soul, is the form which the prospect of an after-state of being must have chiefly assumed in the minds of the earlier believers." These views are defended at large by Fairbairn, in § 7, chapter ii., vol. i., of his "Typology," and the whole section is well wrought out, and very interesting and able.

## PERSIAN ORIGIN EXCLUDED.

- We, however, at present, are chiefly interested in the historical question of the origin among the Jews of the doctrine of the resurrection. And we see that the rabbis clearly testify that it originated from their own system in

its earlier development, and was not a later importation from Persia.

Certainly, in the book of Daniel, where the doctrine of the resurrection is most clearly declared, it has this Jewish form. Daniel is referred for consolation to his own future resurrection to possess the holy land in these words : " Go thou thy way till the end be ; for thou shalt rest, and stand up in thy lot at the end of the days " (Dan. xii. 13).

Fairbairn thinks that the promised land really meant was this earth renovated and made the eternal abode of the Church. Dr. Chalmers and others are disposed to adopt the same view. This question, however, is beyond our present province. It is enough to have traced historically the origin of the doctrine of the resurrection among the Jews.

## CHAPTER VII.

### *THE PSALMS AND THE PROPHETS.*

IN our remarks on the patriarchs and Moses, we said that the union with an immortal God, in a covenant, and in carrying out a plan for eternal ages, tended directly to a belief in eternal life and endless retributions. The want of any recorded early belief of this kind we explained by the fact that the experience of the early ages lacked a poet like David to record it in sacred songs. But we proved, by the testimony of the Epistle to the Hebrews, sustained by coincident historic evidence, that such an experience did exist.

#### THE BOOK OF PSALMS.

But, as soon as we come to the book of Psalms, all doubt on this question is removed. The tendency which we alleged is there seen in its full development. We do not commonly realize the magnitude of the change effected by David when he introduced into the worship of God the singing of psalms. For centuries the Mosaic ritual had been observed without this act of worship. Moses made no provision for it. Only one of the psalms is ascribed to him, and there is no evidence that even that one was sung until the time of David. But, as soon as we enter the book of Psalms, the wanting element of recorded religious experience appears in full power.

Now, what we stated of the tendency of a covenant

with an immortal God, and with reference to an eternal plan to produce the belief of eternal life with him, is fully verified. There is disclosed a doctrine of immortality, and of eternal rewards, that has its roots in the covenant of God with the fathers. It is our purpose to prove that this doctrine of eternal life and future retributions is, in fact, found in the book of Psalms, and that it has its roots in a system essentially unlike that of the Zend-Avesta, and cannot be traced to Persia.

#### GROUND OF BELIEF IN IMMORTALITY.

But before doing this it will be expedient to consider the real foundations of any reliable belief in immortality. Plato sought to find them in the inherent nature of the deathless soul, existing from eternity to eternity. Others have sought them in the aspirations of the soul, and the imperfect development of retribution in this life. But the fundamental positions of the system of the Bible are not of this kind. It does not recognize, nay, it expressly denies, the natural and inherent immortality of the soul. It assures us that God only hath immortality (1 Tim. vi. 16). By this we understand that he only has immortality in the highest sense—that is, inherent immortality. All existences besides himself he created, and he upholds. Men are not, as Plato taught, self-existent, eternal beings, immortal by their very nature. There is no such being except one, and that is God. There is no inherent immortality of the soul in this sense. What God created he sustains in being, and can annihilate if he will. It is by his will that we live, and move, and have our being.

The true and only sure basis of eternal existence is found in the fact that God is immortal, and chooses to have an eternal system, in which his rational creatures can

know and love him and coöperate with him in his eternal plan. So long as God wills this, he will render immortal those intelligent moral beings who are involved in his plan. His will, his power, and not their inherent nature, is the pledge of their immortality. How, then, under such a God can the highest assurance of immortality be given? Not by philosophical reasoning on the nature of mind. God himself must give it. He must reveal himself as immortal; he must disclose an eternal plan; he must take his intelligent creatures into covenant relation with himself; he must reveal himself to them as their portion and their God; he must disclose to them the eternal plan in which they are to coöperate with him, and give them the assurance that their action with him is to be eternal. Let this be done, and there will be the highest possible assurance of immortality. It rests upon the assurance of the immortality of God and the eternity of his kingdom, and that he is the God and the eternal portion of the soul.

## SO IN THE PSALMS: NOT IN THE ZEND-AVESTA.

Now, it is in this way that the assurance of immortality is in fact given in the book of Psalms, and it is given on grounds which the Zend-Avesta does not furnish, but rather contradicts. We shall not attempt a full contrast of the two systems. We shall only consider the God of the Bible and of the Zend-Avesta as centres of systems. The Oromasdes of the Zend-Avesta differs essentially from the Jehovah of the Bible. He is not self-existent, but is derived—as is also Ahriman, his antagonist—from Zervan Akerane. Hence, in the Zend-Avesta they are called *twins*. Of these twins, the progeny of Zervan Akerane, one turns to good, the other to evil, and hence the conflict between them. Hence, if gods, they are derived and



created gods. And, although the work of creation is ascribed to Oromasdes, it is limited to this earth and men and good spirits. The firmament and heavenly bodies he did not create. They are praised in the Zend-Avesta as self-existent and eternal. To Ahriman, also, creative power is ascribed. He created evil spirits, the devas, to oppose the good spirits of Oromasdes. Moreover, the praise, not to say worship, given to the heavenly bodies and the elements and the good spirits, though the supremacy is verbally given to Oromasdes, is opposed to the all-pervading spirit of the Bible, which presents Jehovah as the creator and upholder of all beings and worlds, and as the supreme and only proper object of worship. The comparison could easily be carried further, evincing that, though there are some points of similarity, yet the systems are essentially antagonistic in their fundamental elements. In particular, the great idea of a Messiah, *who is God incarnate*, which is the essence of Christianity, is wanting. Moreover, Zervan Akerane, from whom Oromasdes, the chief acting god, is derived, is worshiped but rarely, if at all. So inconsistent is the Zoroastrian system with itself.

#### PROBABLE ORIGIN OF ZOROASTRIANISM.

It is not improbable, however, that the system began as a system of pure dualism, teaching the existence of two self-existent and eternal gods, one good and the other evil, each having creative power, the one creating good spirits and the other evil. This system may have been, and probably was, modified by contact with other systems, and reduced to a unity in Zervan Akerane, who was represented as the father of Oromasdes and Ahriman. At the same time their creative power was not taken away from them, and, as before, Oromasdes is worshiped as the main and

active God, while the worship of Zervan Akerane, who was merely a philosophic centre of origin and unity, remained undeveloped.

## SYSTEM OF THE BIBLE.

The system of the Bible is not distracted by any such contradictory elements, but is essentially monotheistic, and gives rise to its own consistent doctrine of eternal life and retributions.

In the first place, all the elements of the assurance of eternal life are presented in the most perfect devotional and experimental forms that are found in the language of man.

## CREATION.

In contradistinction to the Zend-Avesta, which ascribes to Oromasdes, the good divinity, only a limited creation, i. e., of the earth, good spirits, and men, while the higher lights are without a beginning and self-existent, the Psalms thus praise God as creator of all: "Praise ye the Lord from the heavens; praise him in the heights; praise ye him all his angels; praise ye him all his hosts; praise ye him *sun* and *moon*; praise him *all ye stars of light*; praise him *ye heavens of heavens*, and ye waters that be above the heavens. Let them praise the name of the Lord, *for he commanded and they were created.*" In like manner, the creation of man and of this lower world, and the divine supremacy in them, are not only narrated historically, but celebrated poetically in strains of unequalled sublimity and beauty.

## GOD'S KINGDOM UNIVERSAL AND ETERNAL.

The absolute universality of God's kingdom and the

eternity of his plans are also declared in the highest strains of devotion :

“All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord, and thy saints shall bless thee. They shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom, and talk of thy power, to make known to the sons of men his mighty acts, and the glorious majesty of his kingdom. Thy kingdom is an *everlasting* kingdom, and thy dominion endureth *through all generations*” (Ps. cxlv. 10–13). “The Lord shall reign *forever*, even thy God, O Zion, unto all generations. Praise ye the Lord ” (Ps. cxlvi. 10). God, too, by a beautiful metaphor, is described as the dwelling-place of his children in all generations, and we are told that those who love him shall dwell in the secret place of the most High, and abide beneath the shadow of the Almighty.

#### COMMUNION WITH GOD.

The personality of God and his self-revealing power are presented in full action, disclosing a character not only of holiness, power and wisdom, but of condescension, love, sympathy, tenderness, compassion, and forgiveness, that removes fear, perfects faith, and gives a full and experimental knowledge of God and communion with him in all his glorious perfections which fills the soul with unutterable joy. Neither in the Zend-Avesta nor in Plato do we find any such full, experimental, joyful knowledge of and intimate communion with a present, loving, self-revealing God.

It is such an experience that gives rise to such utterances as these : “With thee is the fountain of life : in thy light shall we see light” (Ps. xxxvi. 9). “Because thy loving-kindness is better than life, my lips shall praise thee. Thus will I bless thee while I live : I will lift up my

hands in thy name. My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness ; and my mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips : when I remember thee upon my bed, and meditate on thee in the night watches. Because thou hast been my help, therefore in the shadow of thy wings will I rejoice. My soul followeth hard after thee : thy right hand upholdeth me" (Ps. lxiii. 3-8).

## ALL THE ELEMENTS COMBINED.

Now, here are all the elements of a profound and perfect certainty of eternal life. Here is an immortal and eternal God, the creator, upholder, ruler of all things. Here is an eternal plan, an eternal kingdom, here are men who know and love this God, and are in covenant with him, and are coöperating with him in intimate fellowship as his instruments in carrying out his eternal plans. Is it not an intuition of the soul that they too must be immortal ? Does not the very idea of a divine eternal plan demand it ?

But, it will be said, why leave it to intuition or inference ? Why not fully reveal and declare it ? Why not combine all these elements in an explicit declaration of the full assurance of eternal life in God ?

## EXPLICIT DECLARATIONS.

To this we reply, all these elements are combined not in one, but in many explicit declarations of the full assurance of eternal life in God.

Why, then, it may be said, have they been overlooked ? Why has it been represented as doubtful whether the Old Testament saints had a full assurance of eternal life in God ?

We reply, because such declarations occur not in abstract metaphysical and philosophical forms, but in the

form of religious experience, and of lofty and intense devotion. True, there is neither reason nor philosophy in ignoring them for this reason. For it is undeniably true that the highest forms of devotion in communion with God involve not only the highest and noblest emotions of the soul, but the highest and most philosophical intuitions of truth. There cannot be a higher form of intellectual philosophy than full communion with God. For if God is a personal, a loving God, if he has a self-revealing power, if he can make his presence and love a reality, if he can give the assurance of eternal life in that love, then the most highly devotional passages are the very place where we should expect to find a glowing declaration of the assurance of eternal life in the love of God.

#### ILLUSTRATIONS.

Out of many such declarations, take one, and examine it critically, and see what it can be except an unequivocal declaration of the firm belief of eternal life in the love of God.

In the seventy-third Psalm (v. 23–26), after describing the assaults of unbelief and the victory of faith, the Psalmist thus proceeds: “Nevertheless, I am continually with thee: thou hast holden me by my right hand. Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory. Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth whom I desire beside thee. My flesh and my heart fail: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion forever.” Weigh well the import of those few words, “GOD IS MY PORTION FOREVER,” and can the full belief of eternal life, in the love of God, be more clearly or more joyfully declared? Consider too the antithesis: “My flesh and heart fail: they die: but God is the strength of my

heart, and my portion forever." Consider another antithesis: "Thou shalt guide me by thy counsel (in life), and afterward receive me to glory (with thee)." Nor is this a solitary instance. There are numerous declarations of a similar import in the book of Psalms. Listen to some of them:

"Thou wilt show me the path of life: in thy presence is fullness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore" (Ps. xvi. 11).

"He asked life of thee, and thou gavest it him, even length of days forever and ever" (Ps. xxi. 4).

"They shall praise the Lord that seek him: your heart shall live forever" (Ps. xxii. 26).

"Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever" (Ps. xxiii. 6).

"O Lord my God, I will give thanks unto thee forever" (Ps. xxx. 12).

"This God is our God, forever and ever" (Ps. xlviii. 14).

"God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave: for he shall receive me" (Ps. xlix. 15).

"I trust in the mercy of God, forever and ever. I will praise thee forever" (Ps. lii. 8, 9).

"I will abide in thy tabernacle forever: I shall abide before God forever. I will sing praise unto thy name forever" (Ps. lxi. 4, 7, 8).

"I will declare forever; I will sing praises to the God of Jacob" (Ps. lxxv. 9).

"We will bless the Lord from this time forth and for evermore" (Ps. cxv. 18).

"Let Israel hope in the Lord, from henceforth and forever" (Ps. cxxxi. 3).

"The Lord will perfect that which concerneth me: thy mercy, O Lord, endureth forever: forsake not the works of thine own hands" (Ps. cxxxviii. 8).

"Lead me in the way everlasting" (Ps. cxxxix. 24).

In these passages we have but a specimen of the hope of eternal life caused by a self-revealing power of God, and communion with him as a covenant God and portion.

in an eternal plan. In one of them is also expressed the hope of a resurrection from the grave (Ps. xlix. 15). The same hope is expressed in Is. xxvi. 19, and in Hos. x<sup>f</sup>iii. 14; Dan. xii. 2, 3. L

There is also implied in all these passages a retribution of evil to those who are not in communion with God, but at enmity with him. Indeed, this is expressly stated in Ps. lxxiii. 17-20, and in other places. It is true that the retribution of evil is indefinite as to duration and locality. Nor is the idea of locality prominent in the case of the good. The leading idea is eternal life in God, and with God, wherever he may be. In the words of Moses, God is the dwelling-place of the holy soul forever.

If it is said the word *leolam* does *not* by itself denote absolute eternity, I concede it. But the relation to God in which it stands imparts to it that force.

#### PROVERBS.

The idea of retribution in a future life for the good and the bad is also found in the proverbs of popular life, as well as in the records of devotion. We are told that "the wicked is driven away in his wickedness, but the righteous hath hope in his death;" and, again, "When a wicked man dieth, his expectation shall perish, ~~but the righteous hath hope in his death.~~" (Prov. xi. 7, 14, 32). J

iv. 32/ We have thus traced the river of belief that we saw from the mountain-tops of the age of the Maccabees. We have found its sources, not in Persia, but in the revelations of God to his covenant people, beginning in the earliest ages, and coming down the tracts of time.

We propose next to trace the stream to the days of Christ, and then through the Christian ages.

and the hope of unjust men perishes?

## CHAPTER VIII.

### *FROM THE MACCABEES TO THE CHRISTIAN AGES.*

WE have stood upon the mountain-top of vision in the times of the Maccabees, and surveyed the mighty river of belief as to future retribution, that bore a nation to victory and independence, through martyrdom and war. We have traced its sources in the Word and the dispensations of God in the Old Testament.

We are now to trace it down to the development of Christianity, and the formation of the system of Christian doctrine under the completed canon of the New Testament.

#### DIVERSITY OF VIEWS.

Up to the point at which we have arrived, we have found a clear belief in the resurrection, and the retributions of a future state, but no definite details as to the nature and duration of the punishment to be inflicted on the wicked. It is, in fact, generally supposed that clear statements on these points are peculiar to Christianity. This, however, is not the fact. It is, indeed, true that *authoritative* declarations were first made by Christ and his apostles; but, as we have before said, in the interval between the Maccabees and Christianity, all the leading forms of thought on these points which are now found in the Christian community were fully and vividly developed. This was not done, however, in the writings commonly called apocryphal, but in



those designated as apocalyptic. The reason why these writings more fully considered these themes is found in the fact that they undertook to set forth in prophetic vision the coming of the Messiah, and the establishment of his kingdom. Of course, this would involve a statement of the rewards of the righteous, and the punishment of the wicked, analogous to the sublime statement found in the twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew of the coming of Christ, and the rewards of his faithful followers, and the punishment of his enemies.

#### BASIS OF APOCALYPTIC WRITINGS.

These apocalyptic writings are based on the predictions of the Old Testament, and are intended to be a faithful development of the true system of the Bible. But here, as among modern authors, interpreters of prophecy differ among themselves. Hence, it happens that the winding up of all things is variously represented, so far as the punishment of the wicked is concerned. By some they are represented as finally annihilated, by others as ultimately restored to holiness, and by still others as eternally punished. Hence, before we come to Christ and his statements, we shall find that the public mind of the religious world had been intensely exercised with investigations on all the leading questions as to man's eternal destiny.

#### INFLUENCE OF APOCALYPTIC WRITINGS.

Before we enter upon the history of Christian discussions, it is of special importance that we familiarize ourselves with these earlier developments. They not only affected the age in which they were written, but also the Christian ages. Some even of the inspired writings were greatly affected by one of these apocalyptic writings—the book of Enoch. The influence of another, the sibylline

verses, is visible in the Church for many centuries, as we shall see.

#### OTHER AUTHORITIES.

But before we enter upon a direct consideration of the teaching of these works, it is proper to say that these are not the only works by which we can fill up the representation of the thinking of this period. There are two other prominent Jews—Josephus and Philo—one of whom, as an historian, the other as a philosopher and commentator on Moses, will throw light on the opinions of the age.

#### GENERAL VIEW OF THE PERIOD.

It is expedient, also, before descending to details, to take a general view of the period of about three centuries between the Maccabees and the formation of the New Testament canon. The influence of the Maccabean age runs across the whole, and there is a strange commingling of Jewish and Christian writings. The sibylline verses were begun by Jews and finished by Christians. The Jewish apocalypse of Ezra was provided by Christians with a Christian introduction and close. It was not until the completion of the New Testament canon that all the elements needed for the full development of Christian doctrine in a pure form were in the hands of the Christian community.

#### CHARACTER OF THE APOSTOLIC AGE.

It is natural to suppose that the nearer we come to Christ and the apostles the purer and more full will be our statements of the true Christian doctrine as to retribution. Hence many carefully examine the writings of the apostolic fathers. This implies an utterly erroneous view of the real state of things in the apostolic age, and up to the

formation of the canon. The apostolic age was eminently the age of verbal testimony and of oral preaching. And yet very often it happens that the whole New Testament is in imagination carried back to the days of Christ, just as we have it now in one volume. It is not realized that the earliest gospels, as we now have them, were not reduced to writing till between the years 60 and 70 after Christ, and that the earliest epistle, the first of Paul to the Thessalonians, was not written earlier than the year 52. The gospels, epistles, and apocalypse of John, were not written till near the close of the century.

#### FORMATION OF THE CANON.

After the writing of the gospels, and epistles, and other books, another work still remained—to collect them, authenticate each of them, and unite them in a volume, thus forming the canon of the New Testament. This work, too, was to be done for a wide geographical territory—for Europe, for Asia, and for Africa. Westcott, in his elaborate work on the canon, and elsewhere, has shown that this work was virtually, though not completely, done by the year 170 after Christ.

What, then, was the state of things before that time? Beginning with the day of Pentecost, in the year 30 till the year 60, none of our gospels were in existence, and after they were written, for a considerable time, many churches had but one gospel and one or two epistles, the number of each being gradually increased as fast as they could be copied and verified.

If, then, it is asked, how was the gospel at first spread through the world? we reply by the living testimony of the original witnesses, who had been with Christ, and who could testify to the great facts of his life, death, resurrec-

tion, and ascension. It was, in fact, through this process of oral teaching that the gospels were finally formed, and by practice and selection condensed into their present limits.

## WRITTEN STANDARD.

During this great and long-continued work of oral teaching, before either gospel or epistle had been written, what was the supreme written standard of appeal? It was the Old Testament. The life of Christ was held up as the fulfillment of the Old Testament. Paul and the twelve alike assume this ground, and reason from the Scriptures to prove it. Westcott truly says: "The written gospel of the first period of the apostolic age was the Old Testament, interpreted by the vivid recollection of the Saviour's ministry. The preaching of the apostles was the unfolding of the law and of the prophets. . . . The knowledge of the teachings of Christ, and of the details of his life, to the close of the second century, were *generally* derived from tradition, and *not from writings*. The gospels were not distinguished by this, their prophetic title. The Old Testament was still the great storehouse from which Christian teachers derived the sources of consolation and conviction."—"Introduction to Gospels," p. 181.

## GREAT FACTS EXPLAINED.

This view of the case is important in order to understand the reasons of a great fact, rarely adverted to, and yet undeniable. That fact is this: The account of the last judgment by Christ, and of the consequent retributions of eternal life, and eternal punishment, which in after-ages has exerted more influence on the doctrine of the Church than all other parts of the Bible united, is not referred to at all in the writings of the apostolic fathers, and is promi-

nently brought forward for the first time in writing in the latter part of the second century, by Justin Martyr and Irenæus. This should not surprise us. This account of the judgment by our Lord is not found in but one gospel, that of Matthew, and this particular gospel the apostolic fathers may have never seen. *How about Barnabas?*

The general view given of this period may also explain another characteristic fact, namely, the great variety of views held in it as to the final destiny of the wicked. Assuming the Old Testament as a standard, the everlasting life of the righteous is plainly taught. So also the punishment of the wicked in a future state is clearly declared; but the nature and duration of that punishment are not definitely and fully set forth. There are passages in the Old Testament which were regarded of old, and still are by many, as teaching the ultimate annihilation of the wicked. Other passages were regarded as teaching their restoration after punishment, while others were regarded as teaching future eternal punishment.

Having given these general views of the period, I shall set forth the history of opinions in the following order:

1. The doctrine of the annihilation of the wicked.
2. That of the restoration of the wicked.
3. That of future eternal punishment.

It is not necessary to say that the advocates of all of these doctrines hold to the eternal blessedness of the righteous, and to a just punishment of the wicked. But shrinking from endless misery, and regarding a final unity of all things in God as infinitely desirable and reasonable, some seek to gain it, either by final annihilation of the wicked, or by their restoration to obedience.

In the first class I place Philo and the author of the

ascension of Isaiah; in the second, the authors of the apocalypse known as the sibylline verses; in the third, the author of the apocalypse of Enoch and of that of Esdras.

To these I shall add the statements of Josephus as to the belief of the Pharisees, Sadducees, and Essenes, in his day.

After this I shall consider the development of the first Christian theological schools, out of which sprang a doctrine of restoration, which led to a controversy of centuries, the effects of which are still universally felt. Finally, I shall speak of the apostolic fathers.

## PHILO JUDEÆUS AND ANNIHILATION.

This eminent Jew was a result of the great intellectual movement of which we have spoken, and the centre of which was Alexandria. He was a native of this city, and was probably born twenty-five years before Christ, and had finished his education under the influence of the schools of Alexandria before Christ appeared. But, as he lived to an advanced age, he not only was developed contemporaneously with him, but survived him, though in all probability he never came in contact with him. Certainly he never recognizes him. He was of a priestly family, and was a Pharisee. He was zealous beyond expression for Moses, and regarded his law as the sum of all wisdom and destined for the human race. And yet he was learned in all the systems of Greek philosophy, but especially an admirer of Plato. He was also a man of influence in political life and in business, as was evinced by the fact that the Jews of Alexandria chose him as their representative to the emperor at Rome, to justify them with reference to a tumult that had taken place at Alexandria. There is no need at

*th. is quite at variance with the representations in e.g.  
Keller's Philo's "Weltschöpfung" p. 243*

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this time to speak of his principles of Scriptural interpretation, except to say that they exerted for ages a profound influence on the Church through Origen and the theological school of Alexandria. But these principles have no influence on the question now before us, as he speaks in accordance with the general principles of moral government, and without any mystical interpretation of the Scriptures. Of him Döllinger says, "Philo represents the wicked as perishing with the dissolution of their bodies." Others quote passages from him, representing the wicked as surviving death and suffering in Hades. There are, however, passages that go beyond this. Hades was regarded as an abyss in the centre of the earth. But Philo held that even the earth itself was to be destroyed, and Hades and the wicked with it, probably as the Stoics taught, by fire. This view is fundamental, and is copiously set forth in his treatise on "Providence," § 34. He says:

*Book I.*

"There is a Providence that directs the obedient, and places rulers and judges over the disobedient, and by them corrects the contumacy of men, so that by obedience they may obtain honor from God for their virtue.

"But providence is annihilated if the good things of the world are equally distributed so that the wicked always enjoy them."

In this we see the same line of thought that led the Psalmist, in Ps. lxxiii., to feel the need of retribution on the wicked who prosper in this world. The Psalmist says, accordingly, that they are "cast down into destruction in a moment, and utterly consumed with terrors," when God awakes to judgment. Philo may have understood this to denote annihilation. At all events this is the final retribution on the wicked which he anticipates, for he proceeds to say:

"But their fairest flower is withered by a just judge, by their destruction when heaven and earth pass away."

He then shows that the prospect of divine retribution and of so fearful a final doom will destroy all the pleasures of a sinful life. As to the final destruction of the world he thus speaks :

“The destruction of the world is to be ascribed to the judicial retribution of the Creator. Since the folly of sin corrupts the development of the moral nature of sinners, it impels the judge to retribution, although for a time he has judged it proper to sustain and nourish their corrupt and infamous life.”

He then sets forth the benevolent purpose of God in all of this forbearance :

“The eye of the judge does not overlook the burning of the mind set on fire by lascivious and unclean deeds, but rather like a father educating children, now by fear and now by great gifts, he knows how to dissuade from such unjust and aggressive deeds.”

The influence of sinful habit in rendering all this vain is next set forth in striking terms :

“But those who are dissolved in all effeminate pleasures, and deceived by the show of transient joys, since they cannot endure to go without them, are impelled by them to an impious and violent life.”

He then sets forth the final issue, destruction with a burning world :

“Since they have thus entirely withdrawn themselves from the interests of divine Providence in the creation of the human mind, they must undergo that destructive wrath which hangs over all the elements.”

He then justifies this retribution on principles of justice :

“Since they endeavored to destroy this world, this most perfect work of divine Providence, when this most beautiful workmanship



of the Creator is destroyed, they will be involved in the destruction. Thus on those who have been disobedient he will inflict a deserved retribution. Then that in and by which they executed their desires, namely, this beautiful world, will be dissolved and destroyed, since, through the absorption of their hearts in sin, all regard to what is honorable and right, and due to God, has perished from among them."

Book I.

\*

In his "Questions on Genesis," § 51, he exhibits the idea of the annihilation of the spirit in another form. Speaking of the return of man to the earth, from which he was taken, he says, "Man was not made from earth alone, but from the divine Spirit also." He then says: "If one is inflamed with the love of virtue, *which makes the mind immortal*, he has obtained a lot wholly heavenly. But he who is absorbed in the love of pleasure, by which the death of the spirit is caused, again gives himself up to the earth. So, then, of a wicked and depraved man the beginning and end are earth, of a virtuous man heaven."

Such opinions of such a man could not be without influence. Of him Döllinger says: "With the exception of the apostolic circle he was the man most distinguished for intellectual attainments whom the Jew then possessed. He was a man of rare endowments and high cultivation, from his comprehensive studies and intimate acquaintance with Greek literature; his piety was earnest and his faith firm" (p. 398).

#### ASCENSION OF ISAIAH.

That these views did affect some Christians is plain from the fact that they occur in substance in the ascension of Isaiah, a Christian apocalypse of the same class with that of Enoch. It was written by a Christian Jew, in the years 68 and 69 after Christ. In the fourth chapter occurs the following passage: "There shall also be a resurrection and

\* "It should have been stated that these ascension treatises are preserved only in an Arabic version" E.A.

a judgment in those days. Then the beloved shall cause to ascend from him a fire to consume all the ungodly who shall be as if they had never been created." The basis of this work is laid in the assumption that Isaiah ascends to the seventh heaven, and reveals the mysteries of the spirit-world and the destinies of the future. It has, of course, to us, no authority, but it clearly reveals what one Christian writer, at that time, believed and taught as to the destiny of the wicked.

## OTHER ADVOCATES.

The doctrine of the annihilation of the wicked will also be found in Justin Martyr and Irenæus, in the next century, but we shall defer our notice of them to another occasion. The manner in which they arrive at this result differs from that which Philo presents. It will demand and repay careful consideration.

Our attention will next be directed to the earnest development of the doctrine of the final restoration of the wicked to holiness and to heaven.

## CHAPTER IX.

### *DEVELOPMENT OF UNIVERSAL RESTORATION.*

By the doctrine of universal restoration, in its broadest and most generic sense, we mean the doctrine that all sinful beings will be finally restored to holiness and eternal life, and that thus the harmony and unity of the universe will be restored. It was in this broad sense that Origen held it, when he taught the future restoration, not only of all men, but also of all fallen spirits, not even excepting the devil himself.

#### VARIOUS FORMS.

But the doctrine has been held by some as applicable to all men, without any hope as to the devil and his angels, either because they have no belief in their existence; or because, like the Persian divines in the Zend-Avesta, they believe in their annihilation; or because, if all men are saved, they are willing to give up the evil angels to endless punishment, though this would not be very consistent with their principles.

The doctrine of universal restoration applied to men has also been held in different forms. In the statements of some, ideas of material purification by fire and torment have been predominant. Others, like Origen, have entirely excluded material fire, and, holding to the eternal possession of free agency, made the process of purification

to depend on the truth operating to produce deep conviction of sin, and of ill desert, filling the spirit with unspeakable anguish, until, by repentance and a return to holiness, it is delivered and restored to eternal life. Others, like Theodore of Mopsuestia, have regarded a temporary process of sinning as indispensable to full spiritual development, and the formation of a firm and established holy character, and have taught that God will surely conduct all men through this process of education, until finally they are established in holiness and eternal life.

## NEED OF DISCRIMINATION.

These views were historically developed in the order in which we have stated them, and will be more fully set forth in the course of this history. This summary view is here given for the sake of greater clearness of conception during our narrative. Much confusion and error have arisen in different ages from the fact that the analogical, spiritual sense of the word fire has been overlooked, and that thus that which was in the Word of God spoken analogically and spiritually has been used to sustain a doctrine of literal fire in the punishment of the wicked. The merits of Origen are great in having entirely rejected the gross literalism of torments by material fire. Before him such literalism was universal. Accordingly, we shall find an example of it in the first appearance of the doctrine of universal restoration.

## FIRST STATEMENT.

The first statement of this doctrine is found in the Sibylline oracles.

It is in them, however, as part of a general account of the day of judgment, including its antecedents and con-

sequents. It has a peculiar interest as probably the first written description of that day by a Christian.

#### INCREASED INTEREST.

This interest is increased by the fact that it is distinctly appealed to in the hymn on the Judgment, that greatest Latin hymn of the middle ages, *Dies Iræ*, the "Day of Wrath." Of this Prof. Schaff says, "It excites new wonder on every reading, and to it no translation in any modern language can do full justice." He calls it "That incomparable giant hymn on the Judgment, the tremendous power of which resides first, indeed, in its earnest matter, but next in its inimitable mastery of the musical treatment of the vowels." Yet in this great hymn there is a virtual indorsement of the Sibylline verses, by appealing to the Sybil alongside of David as authority, with reference to that day:

"Dies Iræ, dies illa,  
Solvat seclum in favilla,  
Teste David cum Sibylla."

"The day of wrath, that dreadful day, shall dissolve the world into ashes, according to the testimony of David with the Sibyl." Some of the versions of this hymn do not show this appeal to the Sibyl, for the translators, having outgrown the faith of the middle ages, seem to shrink from so prominent and sacred a recognition of the Sibyl. Hence, in the translation adopted in the "Plymouth Collection," we find this version of the first three lines:

"Day of wrath, that day of burning,  
All shall melt to ashes turning,  
All foretold by seers discerning."

Here the unlearned English reader would have no con-

ception who these discerning seers could be. Least of all would he conjecture that they were David and the Sibyl. But as soon as this is known, the inquiry at once arises, How and when did these seers foretell these things ?

## PREDICTIONS.

As to David, it may meet the exigencies of the case to say that, in Psalm ciii. 26, 27, he testifies that the heavens and the earth, which God of old created, shall perish and be changed as a vesture. But even here there is nothing specifically said about dissolution into ashes by fire, though it may be implied. But there is no such deficiency in the case of the Sibyl. In her testimony the fire is prominent, dissolving the universe, and explicit mention is made of the ashes into which all things are dissolved.

But if any shrink from such an appeal, they should recall the usages of the age of the poet. In this appeal the author of this hymn did not act without illustrious precedent. Dr. Schaff says, vol. i., p. 205 : "The first appeal of the apologists was, of course, to the prophetic writings. But even a Clement of Alexandria, and, with more caution, an Origen, a Eusebius, and St. Augustine, employed, also without hesitation, apocryphal prophecies, especially the Sibylline Oracles." Lactantius quoted these oracles so freely that over two folio pages of Gallandius are needed to present a conspectus of his quotations.

## THE SIBYL. WHO ?

The word sibyl means a revealer of the counsels of God, that is, a prophetess. It was applied to at least ten in the heathen world, and Dr. Schaff as well as Bishop Horsley believes that some of their revelations were true. "All was not error and pious fraud. Through all heathenism

there runs, in truth, a dim, unconscious presentiment of Christianity." In proof, he refers to the fourth "Eclogue" of Virgil.

But the Sibyl of these verses was not one of these heathen prophetesses, but, according to her own testimony, one of the daughters-in-law of Noah, a person of strict veracity, who was with him in the ark, and who was, therefore, able to give a summary of the history of the world before the flood, as well as to predict its future fates. Of the Sibylline verses there were at least two authors. One was a Jew, who wrote about one hundred and twenty years before Christ, and foretold the coming and kingdom of the Messiah, following, mainly, the Hebrew prophets. Of his views of the Messiah and his kingdom Westcott has given a summary (pp. 114-116, "Study of the Gospels"). In these, although there is retribution when the Messiah establishes his kingdom, and rewards his people, and punishes his enemies, yet the peculiar features of the final day of judgment and its results spoken of in the New Testament are not found. These are presented in the second book, which obviously proceeded from a Christian writer. And yet he follows no one of the New Testament writers absolutely, and sometimes introduces matter found in none of them. *The quotation is from Orac. Sibyl. ii. 194-3.*

#### THE JUDGMENT.

The great drama is opened by a night of fearful and universal gloom, during which a deluge of fire from heaven is suddenly poured upon the earth, resulting in the utter dissolution of the elements of the universe, for this fiery deluge extends not only to the earth and all the works that are therein, but also to the heavenly luminaries. All worlds are thus dissolved into one great ruin, and the seer expressly informs us that ashes shall cover all things, and

thus justifies the appeal of the poet. Of such a deluge of fire nothing is said in our Saviour's account of the day of judgment in Matt. xxv. But in 2 Peter the burning of the heavens and the earth by fire, and the consequent dissolution of the elements, are expressly mentioned, and the Sibylline poet may have followed him or his authorities.

## THE JUDGE.

In the personalities of the judgment he follows Dan. vii., where the Ancient of days first is seen enthroned, and then the Messiah comes to him in the clouds of heaven, to receive his glorious kingdom. In like manner the Eternal Father is first enthroned, and then Christ the judge, himself immortal, appears in glory with his holy angels, and, throned on a cloud, comes to the immortal Father, and sits in majesty at his right hand on the judgment-seat to judge the life and the deeds of godly and of ungodly men.

## THE ASSEMBLY.

Before the judgment the dead of all ages are raised, and reinvested with bodies by the mighty power of God. No account is made of difficulties. The writer specifies those who died before the flood, those consumed by birds, beasts, and serpents, and those burned by fire. But over all difficulties the almighty power of God triumphs. Then, by the angels, all, good and bad, are gathered before the judgment-seat. Moses, Abraham, and other eminent saints, are specially named. But here a remarkable deviation from our Saviour's account occurs.

## THE SEPARATION.

No public summation of their deeds by the Judge is made, nor is a sentence pronounced; on the other hand,



they are divided by being made to pass through a river of fire. By this process the righteous are separated from the wicked and saved. The angels convey them safely through the burning river to their heavenly home. But the wicked are abandoned to the river of fire, where they suffer for whole ages according to the deeds they have done. A long list of their crimes is given, such as murder, lies, theft, adultery, slander, apostacy from God, idolatry.

#### PUNISHMENT.

The punishment inflicted on them is then set forth in great detail. They are chained by God with fiery chains to a mountain, around which flows the river of fire, and the angels of the eternal God scourge them, with fearful severity, with fiery scourges.

After this they are exposed in the darkness of Tartarus to horrid monsters. Then the most wicked are condemned to go through a fiery circuit of the river of fire. Meanwhile their ceaseless lamentations ascend, until at last they pay in suffering thrice as much as they have sinned. In their torments they gnash with their teeth, and in vain desire to die. They implore God for deliverance, but he turns from them and reminds them that by the incarnation he gave them the opportunity for repentance in the seven ages of the world's history.

After all this the good are fully described and their happy lot. A long account is given of the heavenly world, and its holy society and various forms of happiness.

#### FINAL RESTORATION.

But according to this prophetess the holy cannot be happy even amid the joys of heaven while others are suffering. Hence, with one voice, they petition God for their

delivery. Nor is their petition vain. Thus entreated, he will deliver them from the devouring fire and from eternal gnashing of teeth. Having thus delivered them, he will firmly establish them and assign them, through his people, to a new and eternal life among the immortals.

This view of restitution is not peculiar in distinctly bringing out that feeling of compassion and sympathy for the lost that has since been repeatedly expressed during the ages. But it is peculiar in this, that it makes the expression of it to God the turning-point of the system. God at first rejects the prayers of the wicked for salvation, and it is not until he is moved by the earnest entreaties of the holy that he interposes to deliver them.

## INFLUENCE OF THIS VIEW.

That this view was not without popular power is plain from one fact. Augustine states, in his "City of God," that there were many tender-hearted souls in the west who were moved with sympathy for the lost, and denied the eternity of their punishment. In stating their reasonings he gives a prominent place to this view of the merciful prophetess, and devotes one whole chapter to setting forth the principles of their reasoning. As he presents them they have no little plausibility. They insisted on the fact that Christians, even in this imperfect state, were imbued with the spirit of forgiveness and of prayer even for their enemies. Will they, then, lay aside these traits when perfect and in that perfect world? Will they not pity and forgive and pray for the wicked? Will not the whole church of the redeemed unite in this prayer? And if they do, can it be that God will not feel it and be moved to answer the united petitions of the glorious host of the redeemed?

What Augustine would have said in reply to such reasonings must be matter of conjecture, for he is content to state them without making a reply.

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11  
The account of the judgment and its consequences thus reported has been much abbreviated. In full it occupies 143 lines of Greek hexameters. Yet to a great extent we have translated and used the words of the writer. A view of the Sibylline oracles as a whole excites admiration at the amount of study requisite for their composition. The author aims to use the vocabulary of Homer, and the composition of such a work in twelve books by a Jew or a Christian would have been impossible, had it not been for the careful and extended study of the poems of Homer in the schools of Alexandria. Westcott speaks of the Sibylline writings as exhibiting much enlargement of views. He says, "They stand alone as an attempt to embrace all history, even in its details, in one great theocratic view, and to regard the kingdoms of the world as destined to form provinces in a future kingdom of God."

#### VIEW PHYSICAL.

Yet the views of retribution presented are not elevated. The punishment of the wicked is inflicted by literal fire, nor are the ideas of a moral purification as the means of restoration, afterward promulgated by Origen, visible in the work. It more nearly accords in this respect with the Zoroastrian Bundehesh, in which the final punishment and purification of the wicked are represented as effected by a river of literal fire.

#### NOT ZOROASTRIC.

But one striking fact proves that this prophecy of the judgment was not derived from Persian sources. There is no reference to the devil and his angels in the whole

account ; whereas Ahriman and his angels figure conspicuously in all Zoroastrian accounts of the final day of retribution.

The development of the higher forms of universal restoration will be considered hereafter. We shall next consider the first statement of the doctrine of future eternal punishment in the book of Enoch, a work which affected the public mind and filled the imaginations of men more perhaps than any other apocalyptic work of the ages before Christ.

## CHAPTER X.

### *DEVELOPMENT OF THE DOCTRINE OF FUTURE ETERNAL PUNISHMENT.*

WE have considered the earliest statement of the doctrine of the annihilation of the wicked, by a believer in the Scriptures. We have also set forth the first development of the doctrine of their universal restoration. We now proceed to consider the earliest presentation of the doctrine of future eternal punishment. This is found in the book of Enoch.

#### BOOK OF ENOC

This book was first quoted by the apostle Jude, and after him was quoted or referred to by Justin Martyr, Irenæus, Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, and Augustine. After this it gradually disappeared, and was lost till in 1773 Bruce brought from Abyssinia to England a complete Ethiopic translation of it. This in 1838 was translated by Archbishop Laurence into English and Latin. This gave a great impulse to the study of the book. Prof. Stuart published an able view of it, and Hoffman, Gfrörer, and Dillman, translated it into German and Latin. Ewald also and others have made a thorough study of the book. The most important authorities concur in the belief that it was written before Christ, some carrying its composition, at least in part, back to the early part of the age of the Maccabees. The evidence seems clearly to sustain these views, but we cannot now enter into this question, but,

resting on these results, shall proceed to consider its utterances on the subject now under consideration.

#### INSULATED QUOTATIONS.

It would be easy, by direct and multiplied quotations taken out of their connection, to show that it teaches, in most explicit terms, the eternal punishment of the fallen angels, and of wicked men. But such insulated extracts would not give a fair idea of the light in which these doctrines are presented in the book. We should at once weave them into a modern fabric of doctrine such as is now held, whereas we ought to see them in the relations in which they stand in the book. In order to do this it is absolutely necessary to present the system to which they belong, and of which they are parts. As this is far removed from our present modes of conception, it is proper to state it with some fullness.

#### SYSTEM OF ENOCH.

One grand peculiarity of the system of Enoch is, that it is not founded on the fall in Adam, but on the fall of the angels. This view was extensively read and studied and appealed to by the early Christian fathers. Who, then, are the fallen angels of whom the book speaks, and whose judgment and eternal punishment it so clearly sets forth? They are not the devil and his angels, of whom we should naturally think, with our modern views, but those particular angels, supposed of old to be spoken of in the sixth chapter of Genesis, who, seeing the daughters of men that they were fair, took them wives of all that they chose. By these wives, the angels aforesaid became the fathers of the giants by whom the earth was desolated, and whose spirits, after death, became evil spirits, or demons.

But it will be said that the Bible does not speak of angels as thus taking wives of men, but of the *sons* of God. This is true of the Hebrew text, and of our English version.

#### THE SEPTUAGINT.

But some manuscripts of the Septuagint have the reading *angels of God*, instead of sons of God. This was the reading followed by Philo ("De Gigantibus," § 2), and Josephus. And even now this is the reading of the Alexandrian manuscript, which is followed in the edition of the modern Greek Church, sanctioned by the Synod of all Russia. So, also, the edition of the English Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, agrees purposely with the Greek Church in following the same manuscript, edited by J. E. Grabe, and then by F. Field: Oxford, 1859. The early fathers seem to have followed the same reading, as did also Augustine.

The Septuagint translators, in Job xxxviii. 7, where all the sons of God are spoken of as shouting for joy at the creation, have introduced the word angels as the translation of sons of God. In this, they clearly expressed the real fact of the case. And this shows how the translation, angels of God, could have been introduced in Gen. vi. 2. This translation the author of the book of Enoch followed, and it was generally followed by the early fathers. Nor should we wonder at them, for, as we have seen, even to this day, the Greek Church does the same.

#### THE FOUNDATION OF THE BOOK.

Here, then, is the foundation of the system of the book of Enoch, for, according to him, it was not the fall in Adam that corrupted the world. Of the fall of Adam there is no mention in the book. It was the fall of the angels be-

fore the allurements of the beautiful daughters of men that filled the earth with corruption, violence, and ruin, and called for the flood. For this, too, these angels were bound in everlasting chains, under darkness, unto the judgment of the great day.

#### SEDUCTION, CORRUPTION, OPPRESSION.

The book states, at length, how the angels who had fallen seduced and corrupted men by magic, and the disclosure of various other unlawful secrets. It narrates, also, how men were oppressed by the giants who were born from these unlawful connections. And, indeed, the despotism of the giants must have been terrific, for the book expressly states that they were 300 cubits (450 feet) high, and devoured the labors of men, and animals of all kinds, and finally men themselves. They must, also, have been somewhat numerous, for we are told that there were two hundred of the fallen angels, and from so many a numerous progeny would naturally descend. Not only is the number of these angels given, but the names of their leaders, and the evil arts which each taught.

#### THE CRISIS AND THE ANGELS.

Here, then, was a crisis. Men were corrupted, oppressed, and in danger of destruction beneath a fearful despotism, and cried for aid. The case was first laid before God by a deputation of angels; and God gave directions to the good angels what measures to adopt to destroy the power of so fearful a combination.

#### THE CALL OF ENOCH.

God also sent a direct message to the fallen angels through Enoch, who for this purpose was taken up into



the presence of God, and saw his glory. This message denounced retribution and destruction on them, and on their children, the giants. On receiving the message, the sinful angels were overcome with terror, and entreated Enoch to intercede in their behalf. He complied with their request.

#### REPLY OF GOD.

God sent by Enoch a message, refusing to spare them, because of the magnitude of their crimes. God denounced their guilt in forsaking the elevated spiritual sphere, for which they were made immortal, and without the need of marriage after the manner of men, and coming down to the low plane of carnal lust. He reproved them for forsaking their proper and elevated station as guardians and watchmen over men, and coming down to the degradation of sensual lust to seduce and corrupt them. In view of such crimes, he declares that their case is hopeless, and that they are beyond the reach of mercy.

#### RETRIBUTION.

The holy angels are then ordered to bind them in chains, and reserve them till the great day of the final judgment. Thus, in chapter x., it is said, concerning Samyaza, and the fallen angels who had intercourse with women: "Bind them for seventy generations underneath the earth, even to the day of judgment and of consummation, until the judgment, the effect of which will last forever, be completed. Then shall they be taken away into the lowest depths of the fire in torments, and in confinement shall they be shut up forever."

In chapter xxi. 5, is given a striking account of the place of their eternal punishment:

*These references are to the divisions in Lamen-  
reid's translation. Gillman's Chapters 9 and 10  
differ.*

"I beheld a great fire, blazing and glittering, in the midst of which was a division. Columns of fire struggled together to the end of the abyss, and deep was their descent. Then I exclaimed, 'How terrible is this place, and how difficult to explore!' Uriel, one of the holy angels, who was with me, answered and said: 'Enoch, why art thou alarmed and amazed at this terrific place, at the sight of this place of suffering? This,' he said, 'is the prison of the angels; here they are kept forever.'"

Thus are these fallen angels singled out as the greatest criminals of the ages. They are not confined and punished with sinful men, but in a prison appropriated to them, where they suffer for their great and peculiar crimes, as the great traitors who betrayed and corrupted humanity, over which they had been placed as guardians, and opened the flood-gates of evil on the world. This is the view of them presented from the beginning to the end of the book. It is also noteworthy that these fallen angels are not placed in any immediate connection with the devil, for, though their leaders are enumerated, he is not one of them. Indeed, Satan is but once referred to in the book.

## SINFUL MEN PUNISHED.

So much for the eternal punishment of the fallen angels. As to the eternal punishment of sinful men, and the eternal rewards of heaven, the book is no less explicit. Enoch was conducted by the angels, at divers times, through the spiritual universe, and saw the abodes of the sinful and of the holy. Many quotations might be made as to eternal punishment, for he has vision after vision. But one or two extracts from the twenty-first chapter will remove all uncertainty. After a general view of the places assigned to souls until the day of judgment, he says of the abodes of the wicked: "Here their souls are separated. Moreover, abundant is their suffering until the time of the

great judgment, the castigation and the torment of those who eternally execrate, whose souls are punished and bound there forever."

THE FINAL PRISON.

Of the final prison, he says: "A receptacle has been formed for the souls of unrighteous men and of sinners: of those who have completed crime, and associated with the impious, whom they resemble. Their souls shall not be annihilated in the day of judgment, neither shall they arise from this place."

In chapter xxxviii. he says: "When the light of the righteous shall be manifested, where will the habitation of sinners be? Where the place of rest for those who have rejected the Lord of Spirits? Better would it have been for them had they never been born."

1/ In chapter iv. it is said: "In those days shall the mouth of hell be opened into which they shall be immersed; hell shall swallow up and destroy sinners from the face of the elect."

THE MESSIAH AS JUDGE.

The agency of the Messiah in the judgment on the angels and on sinful men is clearly set forth in chapter lxviii. The names of the leaders of the seducing angels are first given. Then God's oath is proclaimed. Then it is said: "The Son of Man sat upon the throne of his glory, and to him the principal part of the judgment was assigned. Sinners shall disappear and perish, while those who seduced them shall be bound with chains forever."

RANGE OF THE BOOK.

But the book is not entirely confined to the angels. It gives the great outlines of human history, and the relations

of kings and nations to the coming judgment. It also contains disclosures as to the elements, the seasons, and the great laws of the natural world.

## PUNISHMENT BY FIRE.

Thus far, no particular mention of fire in the punishment of wicked men has been made. In chapter cv. this deficiency is supplied. He says: "I beheld a flame of fire blazing brightly, and, as it were, glittering mountains whirled around and agitated from side to side. In it was the clamor of exclamation, of woe, and of great suffering." In reply to his inquiry, "What is it?" the angel said: "There into that place which thou beholdest shall be thrust the spirits of sinners and blasphemers; of those who shall do evil, and who shall pervert all that God has spoken."

## REWARDS OF THE GOOD.

Of the good, God says: "I will bring them into the splendid light of those who love my holy name, and I will place each of them on a throne of glory, of glory peculiarly his own, and they shall be at rest during unnumbered periods. Righteous is the judgment of God."

## GOOD THINGS IN THIS WORLD.

Of sinners who have lived in prosperity and luxury, and been envied by men, therefore, he says, chapter ciii., §4: "Has it not been shown to them that when to the receptacle of the dead their souls shall be made to descend, their evil deeds shall become their greatest torments? Into darkness, into the snare, and into the flame that shall burn to the great judgment shall their spirits enter, and the great judgment shall take effect forever and ever. Woe to you, for to you there shall be no peace!" 995

The whole of chapter xvi. is full of warnings to the wicked in view of the record of their crimes, and the coming day of judgment and retribution—as full as any modern sermon on the same subject.

#### RESURRECTION.

In this book, also, the doctrine of the resurrection is fully declared for the good, but not for the wicked. It is not a part of their privilege and honor. It is their spirits that are said to be thrust into eternal fire.

#### INFLUENCE OF THE BOOK.

This Jewish book of Enoch was extensively read in the early centuries. Justin Martyr, Athenagoras, Irenæus, Tertullian, Clement of Alexandria, Lactantius, and not a few others, adopted the view presented in it of the angels and their fall by carnal lust and sinful intercourse with women. Their ideas of spirits were not so immaterial as to render it incredible. No protest was made against the idea of giants four hundred and fifty feet high. Indeed, even these would not probably reach the indefinite height of Satan as given by Milton, to whose staff the tallest mast of “some great admiral” was but a wand.

#### NOT IN THE CANON.

But though the book was so extensively read, and exerted so wide an influence, it was not regarded as an inspired work, or a part of the Old Testament canon. Tertullian is the only exception to this statement. Although the statements of the book are without authority on us, as to future punishment, they show that, even before Christ came, the minds of the Jews had trodden a wide range as to the future life and endless retri-

butions. Of the book Westcott says, "No apocryphal book is more remarkable for eloquence and poetic vigor." In various parts of the book there are evidences of a Miltonic imagination acting in scenes of judgment and fiery terror. From this apocalypse of Enoch we pass to that of Ezra, which also sets forth future eternal punishment, but from a different standpoint, and as the development of an entirely different system, one far more in affinity with modern modes of thought. This, also, was widely read, and exerted great influence in the early church. It deserves more careful consideration in many respects than it has yet received. In some respects it is an enigma as yet unsolved.

## CHAPTER XI.

### *FUTURE ETERNAL PUNISHMENT IN THE APOCALYPSE OF EZRA.*

WE have set forth future eternal punishment as it is presented in the Apocalypse of Enoch. We have seen that the basis of the system of which it was a part was the fall of the angels through the love of the fair daughters of men, spoken of in Gen. vi. 2, and the corruption thence originating. In the Apocalypse of Ezra the doctrine of future eternal punishment is retained, but this basis of the system disappears, and no reference is made to evil angels at all. Even the devil utterly disappears. An entirely new basis comes in sight. This fact deserves more attention than it has ever received.

#### NEW BASIS.

This new basis, however, is not quite so remote from modern thought as the other. Indeed, it is likely to meet a very general recognition, for it is nothing else but the doctrine of the fall in Adam.

This is not, however, in the Augustinian form of the identity of Adam and his posterity, and their guilt for his sin, nor in the form of Dr. Hodge, of Princeton, of a covenant with the race through Adam as their representative head, so that his sin is reckoned as their sin. It is the doctrine that, by an inscrutable law of evil through Adam's sin, original righteousness passed away from the race; and

the same evil heart that was in Adam reappears in all his posterity, and results in the eternal perdition of the great majority of the human race, not by annihilation, but by endless misery. This is set forth as emphatically announced by God, and is assumed by Ezra. The condemnation of men is justified on the ground that they are, notwithstanding, free moral agents, knowing their duty, and wickedly refusing to do it.

## MODE OF DISCUSSION.

This doctrine is discussed in a kind of dialogue, in which the speakers are God, Ezra, and an angel. The doctrine is defended, not by Ezra, but by God or by the angel who is God's representative and sometimes speaks as God himself, and is so addressed. On the other hand, Ezra presents very serious objections to the doctrine as set forth, and protests against it with great keenness on moral and rational grounds. Indeed, as the case is presented, he has altogether the advantage as to moral impression. Nor is this all. He repudiates the doctrine as based on the fall of Adam with the highest and most affecting forms of moral and sympathetic emotion. On the whole, the Apocalypse of Ezra must be regarded as one of the most remarkable productions of antiquity.

It seems to present the doctrine of future eternal punishment based on the fall of Adam as true, according to the statements of God and the angel, and yet as entirely unsatisfactory to Ezra on moral and rational grounds. And the marked feature of the case is that, though Ezra seems to have decidedly the best of the argument, yet, without retracting anything, he simply submits to God.



## ORIGIN OF THE BOOK.

The book professes to have been written by Ezra, in the thirtieth year after the Babylonish captivity. Lücke, Van der Vlis, Laurence, and Hilgenfeld, place its composition in the latter part of the century before Christ. Other eminent scholars place it somewhat later. But all agree that a Jew was the author. As it stands in the Apocrypha of our English Bible, it is called the Second Book of Esdras. But there is decisive evidence that the two opening and two concluding chapters are a Christian interpolation, and that a whole chapter has been omitted at vii. 35, which Archbishop Laurence has restored from the Ethiopic and Arabic translations of the book. Laurence has also given a new translation in English and Latin of the whole. It is upon the Apocalypse of Ezra, thus restored to its original form and newly translated, that our remarks are based.

The book was extensively read, and exerted great influence among the fathers. By Clement of Alexandria it was ascribed to the prophet Ezra, and regarded as inspired and canonical. With him Irenæus, Tertullian, and Ambrose, agreed. Indeed, Ambrose made large quotations from it as of divine authority. The book deserves, therefore, attentive study, by reason of its influence on ancient thought. It does not open with a consideration of eternal punishment. It begins with a consideration of the doctrine of original sin in its relations to God's dealings with Israel in the captivity.

## EZRA'S OPENING AND REJOINDERS.

Ezra was convinced that if an evil heart was derived to all men from Adam, it was so deeply at the foundation of all history that everything needed to be explained and

justified in the light of it in order to understand it truly and thoroughly.

He recounts, therefore, the facts of history to God—the wickedness that called for the flood; the speedy apostasy after the flood, and again, after the giving of the law, and again, after the building of the temple; and he declares that the deep cause of all these apostacies was the evil heart, derived from Adam, which God caused and did not take away. To this he recurs again and again through his book. He earnestly calls on God to justify his dealings with his people from this standpoint.

He is met by the assertion of the angel that to understand this doctrine of the evil heart is beyond his capacity, and that it is an immodest boldness for him to undertake it.

He is not intimidated by this repulse, but gives a bold and profound reply. He says, “It were better not to exist than thus to live under the power of the law of sin, and to suffer for it, and yet not to know how or why it is.”

The angel then tells him: “God only in heaven can understand such high things; you are a man on earth and cannot do it. Why aim at such high mysteries?”

Ezra boldly replies, “Why, then, are we endowed with a reasoning soul?” He adds: “I was not asking as to high things, but as to things taking place daily before us. I am inquiring into God’s dealings with us from this standpoint.”

FINAL RELIEF PROMISED.

This boldness is not further reprovèd; it is rather yielded to. Ezra is told that the end of the world and the final judgment are near, and that in their light even the mysteries of Adam’s sin can and will be explained. After many questions as to the time and to the signs of the day and what shall precede it, the judgment itself is described.

Nothing is taken from the New Testament descriptions of the day. It is the view of a Jew familiar with the Old Testament, and in some things it widely differs from the New Testament.

#### THE RESURRECTION AND THE JUDGMENT.

The resurrection and the judgment are thus set forth to Ezra: "The earth shall restore those that are asleep in her, and so shall the dust those that dwell in silence; and the secret places shall deliver those souls that were committed unto them. And the Most High shall appear upon the seat of judgment, and misery (of the good) shall pass away, and the long-suffering shall have an end. But judgment only shall remain, truth shall stand and faith shall wax strong, and the work shall follow, and the reward be shewed, and the good deeds be of force and wicked deeds shall bear no rule" (vii. 32-35).

*(At this point the omitted and restored chapter begins.)*

"Then shall the deep pit of condemnation lie open before the region of consolation, and the furnace of hell appear before the paradise of joy. On that day shall the Most High say to the wicked who are risen: 'Look and understand who it is that you have denied, whom ye would not obey and whose commands ye have despised. Before you on one side joy and consolation, on the other judgment and fire.' Thus shall he speak to them in the day of judgment."

#### EZRA'S DISSATISFACTION.

In view of this result, so favorable to the good, Ezra does not, as might have been expected, express joy. On the other hand, he grieves because the number of the good is so small. On account of Adam's sin he sorrows that so few are saved, and so many condemned. The evil heart,

he says, derived from Adam, leads to sin and ruin. This is true almost universally.

## GOD'S REPLY.

To this God in substance replies : " That which is scarce is most valuable. Gold is more scarce than silver, iron, lead, clay, and therefore more valuable. So shall I rejoice in the few that live, for in them I am glorified. Nor do I grieve on account of them who perish, for, like a fire and smoke, they burn, rage, and are extinguished." This seems to be a very cold-hearted reply.

## EZRA'S REJOINDER.

The reply of Ezra to this deserves particular notice. It is in effect this : The possession of responsible free agency under such a system is not a blessing but a curse. To be an irresponsible animal is far better than to be an accountable free agent under such a system.

" Then I answered him and said, Surely it would have been better not to have had an understanding heart formed in us than to have had it formed, and to increase with us, and yet on account of this to be condemned ; for we know that we must perish."

## EZRA'S FIRST LAMENT.

Then follows an expression of sorrow over the sad condition and destiny of man, unparalleled in theological literature : " Let the human race lament, while the beasts of the field rejoice. Let all who are born of woman weep, while all the flocks of cattle bound for joy. For their condition is much better than ours. No judgment awaits them, nor are they obnoxious to punishment. Nor do they hope for life after death. What profit is our life to us ?

All who are born are immersed in sin, full of iniquity and laden with transgressions. Truly it would have been better for us if we had not been capable of being judged after death."

GOD'S REPLY.

The reply put into the mouth of God does not meet the point of this appeal. It simply states the fact that God, from the beginning, determined that men should be responsible to judgment, and they are. They know their duty, and do not do it, and therefore they shall be punished. "He replied, when the Most High created the world, Adam, and his posterity, he previously ordained judgment and punishment. Now then learn wisdom from thy own words, for thou saidst an understanding heart has increased within us; therefore will all who inhabit the earth be punished, because they are conscious of their crimes. Knowing, they have not obeyed. Having understood his law, they have broken it. What can they say when judged?"

QUESTIONS OF EZRA.

Ezra is silent and does not pursue the discussion further at this point, but inquires as to the state of the soul after death. He is told that all souls return to God, and then are assigned places where they anticipate the judgment-day; and the various sources of suffering to the wicked, and joy to the righteous, during the interval, are pointed out.

He then asks whether the righteous can effectually intercede for sinners after the judgment—fathers for children, children for fathers, friends and relatives for each other—and he is told that they cannot. No man can assist another. No man can cast his burden on another. Every man must bear his own burden. (*Here the omitted and restored chapter ends, and vii. 36 proceeds.*)

Ezra then refers to many cases of effectual intercession of the saints in the Old Testament, and asks why should it not be so after the judgment? He is told that this world is not a final and fixed state, but the world to come is. In this world, therefore, they have effectually interceded for sinners. But the day of doom is the end of this state and the beginning of immortality. Then shall no man be able to save him who is destroyed, nor to overcome him who hath gotten the victory.

## EZRA'S FINAL REPLY.

The final reply of Ezra is as remarkable as anything that has preceded. I answered them and said: "THIS IS MY FIRST AND LAST SAYING, THAT IT HAD BEEN BETTER NOT TO GIVE THE EARTH UNTO ADAM; OR ELSE, WHEN IT WAS GIVEN HIM, TO HAVE RESTRAINED HIM FROM SINNING." The import of this is plain. No system, blank non-existence of rational beings in this world, would be better than such a system as is based on the fall of Adam. It deserves notice, also, that this is after he has heard the defense ascribed to God—i. e., that men are intelligent beings and know their duty, and cannot justify themselves for their crimes. Ezra goes beneath all this, and calls in question the rectitude of the system itself which could terminate in such results. Nothing can be bolder than his reply.

## EZRA'S SECOND LAMENT.

After this he bursts out into a loud and moving second lament over the inevitable results of the system, as seen in the certain sinfulness and ruin of the vast mass of mankind:

"O thou, Adam, what hast thou done? For though it was thou that sinned, thou art not fallen alone, but we all

who come of thee. For what profit is it to us if there be promised us an immortal life, whereas we have done the works that bring death? That there is promised to us an everlasting hope, whereas we, being most wicked, are hopeless of it? And that there are laid up for us dwellings of health and safety, whereas we have forfeited them by wicked lives? And that the glory of the Most High defends such as have led a holy life, whereas we have walked in the most wicked ways of all? And that thou should be shewed a paradise whose fruit endureth forever, wherein is security and health, since we shall not enter into it? And that the faces of those who have abstained from sin should shine above the stars, but our faces shall be blacker than darkness? For while we lived and committed iniquity we considered not that we should begin to suffer for it after death."

GOD'S REPLY.

The reply to this in the name of God is based on a repeated assertion of the free agency, responsibility, and disobedience, of man :

"Then answered he me and said, This is the condition of the battle which man who is born upon the earth shall fight; that if he be overcome, he shall suffer as thou hast said; but if he gain the victory, he shall receive the reward as I say. For this is the life whereof Moses spoke unto the people while he lived, saying, Choose life, that thou mayst live. Nevertheless, they believed not him, nor yet the prophets after him; no, nor me, who have spoken unto them, that there should not be so much sorrow for their destruction as joy over those who are persuaded to salvation."

SPIRIT OF THE BOOK.

The book then proceeds to consider at great length the

signs of the times and future developments, in which we cannot follow it.

In form it defends, by the authority of God, the doctrine of future eternal punishment, as based on the fall of Adam. On the other hand, the moral influence of Ezra's protest against it is very great, and is met by no adequate reply.

What the author actually meant is not clear. The book is an enigma ; yet it has generally been accepted as a defense of the doctrine. One thing is sure—it goes down to the very depths of human thought and feeling on this great theme. In every age the doctrine of the fall in Adam has been felt to add a new horror to the doctrine of endless punishment, and to make the system utterly indefensible.



## CHAPTER XII.

### *THE CONTEMPORARIES OF CHRIST.*

CHRIST is the great central luminary of history. We rejoice in proportion as we are able to see all events in his light. As to future retribution, as we have seen, there had been great mental activity before his day, and various and decided opinions had been formed and widely promulgated. Let us now endeavor to conceive who they were with whom our Saviour would come in contact, and what forms of belief he would encounter.

#### JEWISH CENTRES.

The Jews of his age had three main centres of population and development—Babylon, Alexandria, and Jerusalem. The Jews of Babylon, as we have seen, were more exposed to Persian and Oriental influences. Those of Alexandria were more under the influence of Greek philosophy. Those of Palestine were more conservative of the original and unaltered institutions of Moses. And yet, at the great yearly festivals at Jerusalem, leading Jews from all these centres were assembled from year to year, and Christ must have met them there. He may have met even Philo in this way. John also tells us that on a certain occasion some Greeks—proselytes, no doubt—came to worship at the feast of the Passover, and desired to see Jesus—John xii. 20. Probably this was not a rare event. In these great gath-

erings there would be scribes, or expounders of the law (called sometimes lawyers), as well as priests, Pharisees, and Sadducees. Probably he met also Essenes, though of them nothing is said in the New Testament. Besides these, he would meet with Roman magistrates and soldiers, and finally, and more than all, he would come in contact with the common people. And in these great convocations there would be those who had read whatever works had been written or published on the great theme of retribution—works called by us apocryphal or apocalyptic. What forms of belief, then, did he meet?

## TESTIMONY OF THE EVANGELISTS.

Looking at the Evangelists, we at once discover one great fact. Christ stood in the midst of a very great, keenly-contested, and wide-spread controversy. On one side were the Sadducees, denying future life and all its retributions, as entirely unknown to the law of Moses. On the other side stood the Pharisees, teaching with emphasis the resurrection, and a future life and its retributions. In this great controversy he sided with the Pharisees. So much we gather clearly from the Evangelists. But what, in their view, were these retributions? On this point the New Testament gives us no definite information whatever. It is not even expressly said that the Pharisees taught that the rewards of the good would be eternal life, though it may be reasonably supposed that they did. Much less does it inform us whether, with Philo, they held to the annihilation of the wicked, or, with the book of Enoch, to their endless punishment. Nor is it intimated that they held to the doctrine of universal restoration. Indeed, it is not probable that, as Jews, full of conceit of their own peculiar prerogatives, they even adopted an idea so enlarged and lib-

eral as the salvation of universal humanity, and their exaltation as sons of God, though it might have been suggested in Persia.

If we had a work on the questions involved in the great controversy of the day by a Sadducee or a Pharisee then living, with what interest should we scrutinize it! Especially would it be interesting to hear from a Sadducee the reasons of their belief, or rather unbelief. But no one arose to represent or defend them to the ages. All that we know of them comes from their opponents.

Of the Pharisees this is not true. There are at least two Pharisees, contemporaries of Christ, who have spoken of them, and these are both distinguished men. One is the apostle Paul and the other is Josephus.

#### TESTIMONY OF PAUL.

But the testimony of Paul in one case is indirect, and bears only on the fact that the Pharisees held to the resurrection. Luke informs us that, on his trial before the Sanhedrim in Jerusalem, Paul, perceiving that one part was Sadducees and the other Pharisees, made a diversion of the Pharisees in his own favor by declaring his faith in the resurrection to be the point on which he was called in question. On this, Luke says, the multitude was divided. "For the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, neither angel nor spirit; but the Pharisees confess both" (Acts xxiii. 6-8).

But after this, on his trial before Felix at Cesarea, he distinctly declares, "I have hope toward God *which they also allow*, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust" (Acts xxiv. 15).

But Paul nowhere states what were their views of the punishment of the wicked, or of the rewards of the righteous.

## BELIEF OF THE MASSES.

That the doctrine of the Pharisees, on the subject of the resurrection, was believed by the masses, there is no reason to doubt. It is clearly indicated by the reply of Martha to Jesus, when he said to her with reference to the time then present, "Thy brother shall rise again." She said unto him, "I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day" (John xi. 24).

## TESTIMONY OF JOSEPHUS.

From Paul let us now turn to the other Pharisee, Josephus, and question him. At first sight it seems as if we should thus obtain full satisfaction, for in each of his great works he professes to give a careful account of the doctrines of the Pharisees, as well as of the Sadducees and Essenes.

But, though he was a priest as well as a Pharisee, he perplexes rather than enlightens us by his disagreement with the testimony of Paul, and of the Evangelists, as to the resurrection.

## HE SEEMS TO TEACH TRANSMIGRATION.

His language teaches rather the transmigration of souls—not into animals, but into new human bodies—than the true doctrine of the resurrection. It is suggested that he uses words ambiguously, so that the Greeks, who held to transmigration, and not resurrection, might put their sense on his words, and, at the same time, believers in the resurrection might interpret them in their own sense. This may be the truth, and, if so, Josephus simply acted on the slippery principle of compromise, which even Christian councils have not hesitated to follow. But the force of his language predominates on the side of transmigration. Take

the statement in his speech at Jotapata, to deter his companions from suicide in a great extremity. He says to them: "Do you not know that those who depart out of this life according to the law of Nature, and pay that debt when he that lent life is pleased to require it back again, enjoy eternal fame? That their souls are pure and obedient, and obtain a most holy place in heaven, whence, in the revolution of ages, they are again sent into pure bodies, while the souls of those whose hands have acted madly against themselves are received into the darkest place in Hades?" ("Jewish War," iii., 8, 5). It deserves notice here that he is speaking to Jews, and not to Greeks, and, unless in reporting his speech for the Greeks he modified his address to his comrades, it is clear that he set forth to them the doctrine of transmigration, and not of resurrection. Again, in ii., 8, 14, he says of the Pharisees: "They say that all souls are immortal, but that the souls of good men only are removed into other bodies, and that the souls of bad men are subject to eternal punishment." Here the resurrection of the unjust is expressly denied, and that of the just is transformed into a removal into other bodies, as already stated. In another place, he states the case thus: "The wicked shall be detained in an everlasting prison, but the righteous shall have power to revive and live again" ("Antiquities," xviii., 1, 3). This last form of words is nearest to a compromise of the two systems, for it can be taken so as to express either.

#### VIEWS OF ALGER AND TWISLETON.

Different views are taken of these facts. Mr. Alger does not hesitate to say that "the Greek culture and philosophical tincture with which Paul was imbued led him to reject the doctrine of a bodily resurrection; and this is prob-

ably the reason why he makes no allusion to that doctrine in his account of the Pharisees." If he was reporting his own opinions, there would be a good reason for saying nothing of the resurrection, if he did not believe it. But it would not be a good reason for misrepresenting the main body of the Pharisees, who held it. We cannot suppose that the Evangelists, and Paul, and our Saviour, were mistaken in asserting that the Pharisees held the doctrine. E. B. T. Twisleton, in Smith's "Bible Dictionary," says: "The value of Josephus's account of the Pharisees would be much greater if he had not accommodated it, more or less, to Greek ideas. So that, in order to arrive at the exact truth, not only much must be added, but likewise much of what he has written must be retranslated, as it were, into Hebrew conceptions." This implies that Josephus, in order to adapt his narration to the Greeks, translated the Jewish resurrection into the transmigration of souls, and that, in order to get at the exact truth, we must translate it back again into the Jewish doctrine of the resurrection of the body. One other view of the case is possible.

## ANOTHER VIEW.

It may be that among the Pharisees there was, in fact, a Grecian party of Alexandrian Jews and their sympathizers, who held to the transmigration of the soul, and called it a resurrection. It would appear, from Luke ix. 7-9, 19, that some of the Jews regarded Christ as one of the old prophets *risen again*. Hence it would seem that if the spirit of an old prophet was born into this world in a new body, it would be called by some of the Jews a resurrection from the dead; for it is hard to suppose that any of them were so ignorant of the fact that Christ was born in the usual way as to suppose that in his case there had been a literal

resurrection of the dead body of any old prophet. If there was such a party, Josephus, in dealing with the Greeks, in order to avoid their prejudices against the resurrection, may have chosen to make these views prominent, though perhaps the majority of the Pharisees held to the literal resurrection of the body. In this supposition there is nothing improbable. The Alexandrian Jews thought very freely. We have seen that Philo held to the annihilation of the wicked, though eternal misery, according to Josephus, was the prevailing doctrine of the Pharisees.

Hence an exact agreement among the Pharisees is improbable. The doctrine of preëxistence among the Greeks was generally associated with the transmigration of souls, and there is evidence that the doctrine of preëxistence was widely spread among the Jews of Alexandria. Of it we have an illustration in the Wisdom of Solomon, in which the wise King of Israel is introduced as saying of himself, "I was an intelligent child, and had a good spirit, yea, rather, being good, I came into a body undefiled" (Wisdom viii. 19, 20). This resembles, in no small degree, the statement of Josephus to his fellow-soldiers that, "in the revolution of ages, the good are sent into pure bodies." The extent of this belief in preëxistence finally became so great that Alger says, "The Talmudists generally believed in the preëxistence of souls in heaven." Indications of this belief in preëxistence occur also among the masses in Palestine, as is indicated by the inquiry of the disciples, "Master, who did sin, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" (John ix. 2). On this supposition we see that Josephus may have stated the truth, though not the whole truth, in saying that the Pharisees held to the transmigration of souls. Of a large number it may have been true, though the majority still held to the resurrection of the body.

## ETERNAL PUNISHMENT.

But, on one point, the testimony of Josephus is full and explicit, and he is our only witness on that point. The Pharisees, as is proved by his testimony already given, held to the doctrine of the eternal punishment of the wicked. According to them, they were never raised from Hades. They never could enter other bodies. They were confined in an everlasting prison. They were subject to eternal punishment.

As to the nature of this punishment, Josephus is silent. He makes no mention of fire, though this means of torment seems to have been naturally suggested among many nations.

## THE ESSENES.

Concerning the Essenes, the third Jewish sect, Josephus says that they taught that the body is corruptible and the soul immortal; that their bodies are prisons of the soul; that the soul, when set free, rejoices, and mounts upward. He says that their views are like the opinions of the Greeks: that good souls dwell in a region that is neither oppressed with storms of rain or snow, or with intense heat; while the bad are consigned to a dark and tempestuous region, full of never-ceasing punishments ("Jewish Wars," ii., 8-13).

So much for the contemporaries of Christ. We will next consider the Christian ages.



## CHAPTER XIII.

### *CHRISTIAN AGES.*

WE come now to the Christian ages. Of these, the nineteenth is fast drawing to a close.

Christ came at the fullness of the times, and laid hold of the destinies of the world, but not in the manner anticipated. Not by armies, and conquest, and a universal worldly empire, but by principles, thoughts, enlarged views of God, man, and the universe, deep and intense emotions, and tireless mental activity. He came to save man from sin, and to renovate society. His own profound words express the character of his coming more perfectly than any other; it was to be as a vital leaven, inserted in human society and destined not to cease its action till the whole system, in all departments, was leavened. The dispensation was to be closed by his second coming and a final judgment.

Hence, these ages are full of thought, of controversies, of conflicts and of revolutions. They are also full of historical documents, in the various languages of men, calling for intense study thoroughly to understand them.

The history of these ages is a vast and sublime ocean on which we are to launch. Nor is it without its dangers. In it are gulf streams and fogs, rocks and shoals, gales and icebergs. Yet, in one part, at least, it has a fascinating

aspect to all, for in it are the beginnings of that vast revolution which is yet shaking the world, and which is destined not to cease till every form of evil is overthrown.

As there is to travelers a fascination in Palestine, Sinai, and Egypt, because in them associations of Moses and of Christ meet them on every side, so the first century till its close, from its constant contact with Christ and his apostles, is full of powerful attractions.

## APOSTOLIC FATHERS.

Hence, too, the deep interest in those who are supposed to be apostolic fathers, that is, those who were associated with the apostles or with their immediate disciples.

Thus, when Irenæus, that great defender of the faith against the Gnostics, says of Polycarp, that he was "instructed by apostles, and had intercourse with many who had seen Christ;" when he further tells how he saw Polycarp when a boy, and adds: "I can tell even the spot in which the blessed Polycarp sat and conversed, and his outgoings and incomings, and the character of his life, and the form of his body, and the conversations which he held with the multitude, and how he related his familiar intercourse with John and the rest who had seen the Lord, and how he rehearsed their sayings, and what things they were which he had heard from them with regard to the Lord and his miracles and teaching," certainly it invests this venerable apostolic father with a deep and peculiar interest. And when Irenæus proceeds to say, "All these things Polycarp related in harmony with the Scriptures (the gospels), as having received them from the eye-witnesses of the word of life," our faith in the historical verity of the gospels in opposition to all mythical theories is gratefully confirmed.

## HISTORICAL FOOTHOLD.

We need not wonder, therefore, if all parties seek to gain a foothold in this region. This foothold is secured only by means of a statement of their case in history.

It was said of Daniel Webster that his great power with a jury lay in the statement of the facts of his case. His argument was virtually complete and he had carried the jury before they supposed that he had begun to reason at all.

In the same way histories have been written to carry the day in behalf of established forms of government and systems of doctrine. The object is to show that they have their roots in the apostolic age.

So for centuries history was written in behalf of the papacy, and, when the desired original documents were not found, they were manufactured, and for ages accepted as genuine.

Hence, in the Reformation, a fundamental work was needed, in exposing false documents, and writing the true history of the early ages, and in this work the Magdeburg Centuriators labored with terrific effect. Of course, the papacy was not silent. Baronius was their advocate, and a cardinalship was his reward. He was a man of vast learning and resources, and as honest as his cause would allow him to be, which is not saying much, for, even to-day, Döllinger, the learned leader of the Old Catholics, has warned the nations of a universal Jesuit conspiracy to falsify and corrupt history in support of the claims of the papacy.

## CONTESTED GROUND.

Hence, almost the whole territory is contested ground. There are hundreds of millions in the Romish and Greek Churches whom modern historical science and criticism have not reached, and who are sensitive to an attack upon even

the grossest forms of error and imposition. The subject of our history is no exception to this general course of remark. Every part of it is contested ground.

#### FOUR ENDS.

History has been written as to the doctrine of retribution with reference to at least four ends.

The first is to depreciate the early fathers as holding almost universally to a system of eternal torments by material fire, thus subjecting the world to a system of degrading terrorism.

The second is to establish as true the current orthodox view of eternal punishment.

The third is to sustain the doctrine of the annihilation of the wicked after a just degree of suffering.

The fourth is to vindicate the doctrine of universal restoration and salvation as having its roots in the early ages.

It will prepare the way for our future investigations if we illustrate, by examples, some of these statements.

#### W. E. H. LECKY.

W. E. H. Lecky is a scholar of extensive reading and original research. His "History of European Morals, from Augustus to Charlemagne," is a work of great value, and his account of the philosophic systems of the Roman Empire indicates a careful study of the original sources of evidence. But when, in his "History of Rationalism" (vol. i., page 316), he speaks of the fathers, he obviously has not studied the original sources, and refers to second-hand authorities of no weight at this day, in the historical world. Thus only can we explain the fact that such a man has committed himself to the statement that follows: "Origen, and his disciple Gregory of Nyssa, in a somewhat hesitating

manner, diverged from the prevailing opinion (eternal torments), and strongly inclined to a figurative interpretation, and to the belief in the ultimate salvation of all. But they were *alone* in their opinion. With these *two* exceptions, all the fathers proclaimed the eternity of torments, and all defined these torments as the action of a literal fire on a sensitive body." The general accuracy of Mr. Lecky, in his historical statements, need not be called in question. But nothing can be more erroneous than this statement. It would require more time than we can here spare to mention and characterize all those among the fathers who did not hold to the doctrine of eternal torments at all, in addition to the two mentioned by Mr. Lecky. But all that is necessary will be said in the course of this history.

PROF. SHEDD.

We will next consider the statement of a defender of the current orthodoxy. This we will take from a work of decided ability and merit, a "History of Christian Doctrine," by Prof. Shedd, of the Union Theological Seminary. In vol. ii., p. 414, he says, "The punishment inflicted upon the lost was regarded by the fathers of the ancient Church, with very few exceptions, as endless." He then makes quotations to that effect from four fathers of the Western Church, to whom he adds Justin Martyr and Chrysostom. He then says, "The *only* exception to the belief in the eternity of future punishment in the ancient Church appears in the Alexandrian school." He then shows how this denial grew out of their anthropology, and adds in conclusion: "The views of Origen concerning future retribution were almost wholly confined to his school. Faint traces of a belief in the remission of punishments in the future world are visible in the writings of Didymus of Alexandria, and

in Gregory of Nyssa. The annihilation of the wicked was taught by Arnobius. *With these exceptions* the ancient Church held that the everlasting destiny of the human soul is decided in this earthly state."

The argument of this passage is plain. It is this: If this is a true statement of facts, then the case of the current orthodoxy is very strong, and little more need be done. The Church has settled the question. But we ask, Is it true?

This statement somewhat transcends the limits set by Lecky to the doctrine of restoration. It is not confined to two individuals, but it is confined to one school, the school of Alexandria. What, then, shall be said of Diodore of Tarsus, not of the school of Alexandria, the eminent teacher of Chrysostom, and a decided advocate of universal restoration? What shall be said of his disciple, Theodore of Mopsuestia, that earnest defender of the same doctrine, of whom Dorner says that he was "the climax and the crown of the school of Antioch?" What shall be said of the great Eastern school of Edessa and Nisibis in which the scriptural exposition of Theodore of Mopsuestia was a supreme authority and text-book? Was Theodore of the school of Alexandria? Not at all. He was of the school of Antioch. He was an opposer of Origen in interpretation, and psychology, and anthropology. And yet he not only taught the doctrine of universal restoration on his own basis, but even introduced it into the liturgy of the Nestorian Church in Eastern Asia. What, too, shall we say of the two great theological schools in which he had a place of such honor and influence? But of this we shall speak more fully at another time, when we consider the relation of the early theological schools to this question. Dr. Shedd should have called to mind a statement in

Guericke's "Church History," as translated by himself: "It is noticeable that the exegetico-grammatical school of Antioch, as well as the allegorizing Alexandrian, adopted and maintained the doctrine of restoration" (p. 349, note 1).

MESSRS. CONSTABLE AND HUDSON.

But there is another statement of the case by Messrs. Constable, of Ireland, and Hudson, of this country, in their elaborate works designed to prove the final annihilation of the wicked. According to Mr. Constable, all the apostolic fathers believed in this doctrine. His list of authorities is quite impressive. Beginning with Barnabas, and going to the year 242, he claims Clemens Romanus, Hermas, Ignatius, Polycarp, Justin Martyr, Theophilus of Antioch, Irenæus, and Clement of Alexandria, so that Arnobius does not stand alone as Prof. Shedd represents, but has very illustrious company. He leaves only Athenagoras, Tatian, and Tertullian, as advocates of eternal torment, and finally he represents Origen, so late as the year 253, as first introducing the doctrine of universal restoration. Mr. Hudson is not less exacting in his claims. He says: "It now remains to show that the early Christians, heralds as they were of the word of life, taught nothing else than the death of the wicked. The documents which here offer themselves are the writings of the so-called apostolic fathers, and other early records" ("Doctrine of a Future Life," p. 289).

Of these claims it is enough to say that some of these witnesses do undeniably testify as alleged, but that a large number do not definitely testify to any view except the general one of future retribution, because the subject had never been up as a controverted question, and the end at which they were aiming did not call for it.

DR. BALLOU.


Dr. Ballou also has written a "History of Ancient Universalism," in which is presented a very different state of facts from that alleged by Mr. Lecky and Prof. Shedd. He claims, and truly, a much wider range, and far greater power for the doctrine of universal salvation, than they admit. The work is one of decided ability, and is written with great candor and a careful examination of authorities. In our opinion, it would benefit Mr. Lecky and Prof. Shedd attentively to consider all the facts and authorities presented in it. We think, however, that he, and especially his editors, in a number of cases, draw conclusions that go beyond the authorities to which they refer. The view given of the theology of Theodore of Mopsuestia, and of the difference between him and Origen, is also incomplete, and needs to be more fully wrought out.

## PLAN OF THE HISTORY.

What, then, do we propose to do in a field of history, every part of which has been, and is, so sternly contested?

We do not propose to go over all the ground in minute detail, fighting our way as we go. We propose rather, first of all, to begin with the account of the last judgment given by Christ, and the views taken of it in the early church, and to give a history of the interpretation of the leading word in that passage, the word *aionios*, translated first *everlasting*, and afterward *eternal*. In a true view of the historical sense of this word is the only key to much of the writing of the fathers, which would be contradictory without it. We propose next to develop certain great and undeniable historical facts as to the first system of Christian theology that was ever published, and which promulgated



universal restoration, of which the illustrious Origen, in or about the year 230, was the author. We propose also to consider the foundation and growth of the first Christian theological schools and their relations to this doctrine. Thus will be developed certain great facts concerning which there can be no controversy, and these will furnish us with a point of vision from which we can survey the whole field, backward toward Christ, and onward to the action of Justinian, through a local council, in condemning the doctrine of universal restoration, so late as the year ~~544~~,  more than three centuries after it was promulgated by Origen. After this year, there is no special difficulty in the history of the doctrine.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### CHRIST AND THE JUDGMENT.

No portion of the Word of God exceeds in sublimity, and wide and enduring influence, the account of the judgment given by Christ, the final judge. A full history of the modes in which it has been understood, and of the influence it has exerted, would be of intense interest, for it has been the great channel of thought and emotion in the Christian ages. The views taken as to the time of the judgment, its nature, and the duration of the consequent retributions, if fully set forth, would make an extended history. But at present we shall consider only the last point, and this brings up the history of opinions on the meaning of the word *aionios* used by Christ and translated *eternal* and *everlasting*. After all, the main question that most deeply moves the mind of man is this: Did Christ, in his account of the judgment, proclaim endless punishment to the wicked?

It is not wonderful that this question moves the world. The nations must stand before his judgment-bar. No investigation as to the nature of the threatened penalty can be too exact or profound. This has created an earnest desire for the testimony of some witness as to the import of his words whose testimony shall be absolute and decisive. The question is, Does *aionios* mean endless?

The history of ecclesiastical opinions on this point does

not go back to the apostolic fathers, for, as we have before stated, there is no reference to Christ's account of the judgment in their writings.

ARISTOTLE.

But some have thought that they have found the desired witness in the eminent philosopher Aristotle. They regard him as declaring that the word *aion*, from which *aionios* is derived, denotes originally and primarily eternity, in the absolute sense, and hence that *aionios* must mean eternal, in the same sense.

This supposed testimony of the illustrious philosopher has exerted a great influence in producing an assured conviction on that point, in the minds of many, which leads them to assume that the idea of eternity is so plainly declared by the words of Christ that to call it in question is a sinful evasion or denial of the Word of God.

This great philosopher has in fact stated that *aion* is derived from two Greek words, the adverb *aei*, *always*, and the participle *on*, *existing*. Hence, assuming that *aei* denotes eternity, it is said on his authority that the original and obvious sense of *aion* is eternity, and that all other senses are secondary and derivative.

This view, assuming that *aei* always denotes eternity, is adapted to exert great influence on candid minds, and has extensively done so.

The eminent Andrew Fuller, in his letters to Mr. Vowler, refers to this passage of Aristotle as deciding the original sense of the word and its usage in the days of Aristotle. ("Works," i., 349). The same passage is also referred to as decisive of the question in the "Encyclopædia of Religious Knowledge," of which the eminent Prof. B. B. Edwards, of Andover Theological Seminary, was one of the

editors (p. 73, *aion*). The passage referred to in support of these assertions occurs in the treatise of Aristotle, "De Coelo," i., 9. On it two questions arise: First, is the etymology of Aristotle correct? Second, admitting it to be correct, does *aei* always denote eternity and does it sanction the translation of the passage given by these writers, and their inference from it that *aion* originally and primarily means eternity? On the first point it must be said that by the general consent of scholars, though Plato and Aristotle were great philosophers, they were very poor etymologists. The true principles of etymology they neither understood nor acted on. For a full view of the facts in the case see Grote's "Plato," vol. ii., pp. 500-550. Sufficient reasons could be given for rejecting this etymology. Yet, though some lexicographers of repute reject it, others of equal authority accept it. And as I prefer to meet the question radically, and to test the argument in its full strength, I will for the present concede the correctness of the etymology of Aristotle.

But, in reply to the second question, I remark that even if the etymology of Aristotle were to be accepted, it is not at all decisive of the question; for the word *aei* does not always or even commonly denote or imply eternity, and in this passage it manifestly does not, and to give it that sense involves Aristotle in inconsistency and absurdity, and in a war with notorious facts in the history of the Greek language. But as this passage has exerted so extensive an influence, I propose to pay particular attention to these statements. Any careful study of the word *aei* will show that singly or in compounds it does not always denote or even imply eternity, but more frequently continuity of being, or character, or action, or habitual action in a given way. The same is true of our English words *ever* and *always*. An

evergreen (*αἰχλῶπος*) is not a tree green to all eternity, but a tree continuously green during its life. In the New Testament *aei* is never used in the sense of eternity, but always to denote habitual action, or a stated mode of action at all proper times. It was Pilate's *usage* to release yearly unto the Jews one prisoner. The mob, therefore, desired him to do as he had ever (*aei*) done unto them, not to or from eternity, but as an annual usage. Peter exhorts the Christians (1 Epis. iii. 15) to be ready always (*aei*) to give a reason of the hope that is in them, that is habitually, at all proper times, not to all eternity. The same usages are found in the Latin *semper* (always), and in the German. Aristotle, moreover, refers to the ancients as sanctioning this etymology of *aion*. But in Homer, the great leader of the ancients, *aei* is rarely used to denote eternity. Damm, in his elaborate "Lexicon and virtual Concordance of Homer," thus defines the word *aei*:

"Ever, always, perpetually, constantly. It does not always denote duration to infinity, but often continuity of action in a small space of time, or assiduous and earnest action in a limited time, or frequent, or oft-repeated, or habitual action. Often *aei* is completed on the same day, and denotes great earnestness and effort." A few illustrations may suffice. Achilles says to Calchas, "It is ever (*aei*) pleasing to you to foretell evils to me" (Il., i., 107); Menelaus says, "Always (*aei*) the minds of the young are unstable" (Il., iii, 109); Homer says that "Atreides took a knife that always (*aei*) hung by the sheath of his great sword" (Il., iii, 272); Jupiter says to Juno, "The laughter-loving Venus is always (*aei*) near to Paris, and averts death from him" (Il., iv, 11); Jupiter says to Juno, "It is always (*aei*) pleasant to you to engage in clandestine counsels apart from me" (Il., i., 541). In all these cases, not eternity,

but continuous or habitual action in a limited time, is denoted. Damm, in his "Lexicon," derives *aion* from *a* intensive and *on*. Yet he looks at it as possibly derived from *aei* and *on*. On this assumption he introduces the idea of continuity of action as involved in it, and rejects the idea of absolute eternity. He thus defines it: "Continuance or duration to the end; any perpetuity. ~~It~~ denotes properly the whole duration of the life of man, the duration of mortal life. Hence, to finish one's *aion* is to die. The words *aei on* denote existing perpetually, and without any intermission, *until the end comes*."

It is the neglect of these plain and undeniable facts and principles that has led to a false and absurd translation of the passage of Aristotle on which so much has been made to rest. I shall now translate it, after premising that it contains certain peculiar views of Aristotle based on the assumption that the earth is the centre of the universal system; that the sun, moon, and stars, revolve around it; that all the matter in the universe is included in it, and yet that, beyond the extreme limit of all revolving worlds, other beings exist. He has been speaking of these spiritual beings beyond all the revolving bodies of the whole material system, and he attempts to prove that there is to them neither matter, nor time, nor a vacuum. Of these beings he says: "They are not in place, nor does time cause them to grow old, nor is there any change in them. But without change, and enjoying the best and most satisfying life, they pass their whole existence" (*aion*). We are here to remember that, according to Aristotle (it matters not whether we can receive his ideas or not), to these beings there is neither *time* nor *place*, but only existence, and we are bound not to translate *aion* eternity, which is infinite time, but existence, continuous existence, as it is defined by Damm. He

*He does  
i. 9 ss*

next proceeds to say: "And indeed this word *aion*, by a divine inspiration, was employed by the ancients; for they called the boundary which surrounds and takes in the time of the life of every man, beyond which, by a necessity of Nature, no action exists, the *aion*; that is, the whole continuous existence of the man." This statement, in fact, agrees with the usage of the ancients, for, as we shall see, they did use *aion* to denote the whole duration of the life of man. It is also a demonstration that by *aion* Aristotle did not mean eternity. Is a definitely bounded human life eternity? To call such a life eternity would be absurd and contradictory. And yet most translators have so absurdly rendered Aristotle. Grote is an exception. (*See further Arist. ii. 4*)

Aristotle proceeds: "On the same principle, the boundary of all the heavens, and the boundary that incloses and comprehends all time and space, is *aion*, a continuous existence, immortal and divine, deriving its name from *ἀει εἶναι*, to exist continuously." On this passage, Liddell and Scott say that *aion* denotes the complete period of the universe, as previously it denoted the complete period of human life. It is manifest that this *aion* is repeatedly said to be a boundary or limitation inclosing the universe. But eternity, from its very idea, is not a definite boundary of anything. Therefore, to translate *aion* eternity, would be contradictory and absurd. It is a continuous existence.

Moreover, as human existence implies a being who exists, so here the existence (*aion*) of the universe implies a being who exists in the *aion*. Hence, Aristotle calls the *aion* immortal and divine.

In this case, the being who exists can be no other than the Supreme God, the immovable mover of all revolving worlds, of whom Aristotle says so much. He, too, is be-

yond the revolving universe, where there is existence, but not time.

That Aristotle meant this Supreme God by *aion* is plain from what he adds: "On whom the being and life of all other beings and things are dependent, in some cases more clearly and obviously, in others more obscurely."

Of eternity none of these things are true. It is not immortal and divine. On it the being and life of all other beings and things are not dependent. Hence to translate *aion* eternity is absurd.

I have thus shown that, if *aion* is rendered eternity in this passage, it involves Aristotle in self-contradiction and utter absurdity. Hence, the argument from his testimony utterly fails.



## CHAPTER XV.

### *THE ANCIENTS.*

BUT, besides what has been said, we are to remember that Aristotle appeals to the ancients as sustaining his view of the import of the word. But, to translate *aion* eternity would also bring him into direct conflict with all the ancients. For, in the early centuries, the idea of eternity does not occur at all in the word, and it was introduced into it only in the later centuries of the language. Nor is it hard to trace the process by which this sense was finally introduced. It is the more important to do this, as there is, in some lexicographers, a disposition still to give eternity as the original sense of *aion*, and the popular mind cannot be thoroughly freed from this fallacy until the real facts in the case are clearly understood.

Moreover, a biographical sketch of this word, and its changes from the beginning to this day, would develop a history of peculiar interest and great profit. But I cannot enter into it in detail. I will only give a sketch of the great river of thought connected with this word, from its earliest beginnings down to this day, when it is the centre of a world-wide controversy.

Who, then, are the ancients to whom Aristotle appeals? Beyond all doubt Homer and Hesiod come into this list, and also the Orphic hymnists. Here, then, if anywhere, we

are to look for the testimony of the ancients. After these come the great lyric and dramatic poets Pindar, Æschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides. To these may be added the historians Herodotus, Thucydides, and Xenophon. Let us then see if Aristotle's appeal to the ancients will sustain the position that the primary and original sense of *aion* was eternity.

What, then, was the original and earliest meaning of this word? I reply LIFE, denoting a physical energy of the system that causes normal action and averts decay. Of this we have a striking illustration in Homer (Il., xix., 27). Here Achilles expresses to his mother his fears that flies will breed worms in the wounds of the slain Menoetius, and cause putrefaction in his body, for life (*aion*) has been destroyed. Here the mind is fixed on life, the vital power, the destruction of which creates the danger of putrefaction. Here, then, the idea of time is utterly excluded. Again, in the lamentation of Andromache over the death of Hector, she says, "Oh, my dear husband, too early hast thou perished from life (*aion*) and left me a widow!" (Il., xxiv., 725).

So, also, Sarpedon says pathetically to Hector, "Do not leave me disabled by a mortal wound, a prey to the Greeks, but defend me, and permit my life (*aion*) to leave me in your city." Here he had no idea of time or of eternity, but only of the privilege of giving up his life in the beloved city Troy, which he had come to defend.

The same use of *aion* to denote life is found in the Homeric "Hymn to Mercury," v. 42., 119, in which that god is described as destroying the life (*aion*) of a mountain-tortoise and making a lyre of its shell, and as destroying the lives (*aionas*) of two cows to prepare a feast. In the fragments of Pindar, "Hypochor." iii., 5, to describe the

death of a man killed by a club, it is said, "His life (*aion*) was dashed out through his bones."

Æschylus, also, in "Prometheus," 862, refers to animal life when he says, "Each wife shall deprive her husband of life (*aion*), plunging into his breast the sharp two-edged sword."

From this abstract idea of life it passed to a concrete form to denote a living spirit, an *áion*, or *aeon*. We see such a transition illustrated by Virgil, in the use of the Latin *vita*, life. Speaking of the spirits of departed men who thronged to meet Æneas, he calls them (*Æn.*, vi., 192) "*vitas sine corpore*" (lives), i. e., living spirits, without bodies. This use of *aion* to denote living spirits does not occur in the Homeric poems. But it does occur in Euripides ("Herac." 900). By the chorus, Jupiter is called *aion*, i. e., the Supreme living Spirit. This accords with Aristotle's use of *aion*. It is found also at a later period in Epictetus, book ii., chap. v., who declares that he is not an *aion* (*a spirit*), but a man. In accredited ecclesiastical writers also various orders of angels are called *aions*. The excess of the Gnostics in multiplying *aions* in their manifold systems seems to have caused a timid reaction in lexicographers, and a desire to drop the word in this sense, as denoting no reality, and as no regular Greek word. Yet its claim to be a true part of the Grecian language cannot be rationally denied or ignored. It ought to have its place in every good lexicon. Hitherto the idea of eternity is so far from being primary and original, that it is entirely excluded. The element of time, in any form, is not included in these original uses of the word.

Nevertheless, as the idea of duration is essentially connected with prolonged life, the word assumed an idea of time and denoted the continuous time of life at any given

point, and also the total duration of life, as stated by Aristotle. Ideas of the circumstances and character of life were also introduced, as a prosperous, honorable, joyful life, or the reverse. In this sense it is commonly used, not only by Homer, but by the great poets, lyric and dramatic—Pindar, Æschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides—who show undeniably how it was understood in common life. In Euripides (“Orestes,” 603) Orestes says, “A happy life (*aion*) is theirs who are well united in marriage.” In “Bacchæ” the chorus says that Semele, “having given birth to Dionysus, left this life (*aion*), being smitten by a divine thunderbolt” (92, 93). In Sophocles (“Philoctetes,” 179), the chorus laments, “O miserable generations of mortals, to whom not even a tolerable life (*aion*) is assigned!” So Philoctetes says (1348), “O sad, hateful, gloomy life!” (*aion*). So Euripides (Hecuba, 754–7), Agamemnon says to Hecuba: “What do you long for? Is it to lay aside your servile life” (*aion*?) She replies: “No, indeed; but having punished the evil-doers to be in servitude all my life” (*aion*). In “Phoiniss.” (1520) Antigone laments that she is to live always a single life (*aion*) with flowing tears. Pindar (“Nemea,” ix., 106) says, “From labors in youth, and justice, proceeds in old age a happy life” (*aion*). In “Frag.,” p. 96, vol. iii., “Do not while you live darken pleasure, for a pleasant life (*aion*) is the best portion for a man.” “Isthmia, vii., 39, “Enjoying daily pleasures, I approach old age, and the fated duration of life” (*aion*). In all these popular writers the idea of eternity does not occur.

But the idea duration of life, or age, does occur; and, as our word *age*, denoting the time of the life of a man, also comes to denote the lifetime of a generation, and then a period marked with some characteristic, as the antediluvian age, or the Mosaic age, and then those living in that

period, so was it with the word *aion*. This is conceded by all.

The senses of the word thus far spoken of, in which the idea of physical life is at first predominant and exclusive, and afterward is united with ideas of time, outward state, and moral character, occur for over five centuries in such writers as Homer, Hesiod, the Orphic Hymnists, Sophocles, Euripides, Pindar, Herodotus, Xenophon, and Thucydides ; but we do not yet come to the idea of eternity.

## CHAPTER XVI.

### THE LATER AGES.

ANOTHER change was necessary in order to arrive at the idea eternity. That change took place, and it was this: The original idea of life was subordinated and disappeared, and ideas of time alone took possession of the whole ground, and *aion*, instead of denoting life, came to denote time.

This change is seen in its greatest completeness in Marcus Aurelius. In his twelve books of "Meditations," so called, he uses *aion* twenty times, and always denotes by it some form of time, and never life.

He says (iv. 43): "Time (*aion*) is a sort of river of events, and a mighty current; for as soon as each event has appeared and has been borne by, still another is carried by and shall be borne onward." Again (vii., 19): "How many a Chrysippus, how many a Socrates, how many an Epictetus, has time (*aion*) already swallowed up!" Again he says (iv., 50): "Behold the immensity of time (*aion*) behind thee, and before thee another boundless expanse."

Speaking as a Stoic, he says (v., 32), "The reason, which pervades all substance, through all time (*aion*), administers the universe by fixed periods."

Again he says (v., 24), "Call to mind the universal substance of which thou sharest a very small part, and the whole of time (*aion*), of which a short and insignificant portion has been assigned to thee."

Again (x., 17): "Contemplate habitually universal time (*aion*) and universal substance, and consider that all individual things as to substance are as a fig-seed, and as to time (*χρόνος*) the turning of a gimlet."

It deserves notice that here he uses *χρόνος* (time), as a synonym of *aion*.

Again (iv., 3), he says, "Consider the boundless extent of infinite time (*aion*) on each side of the present."

Again (xii., 32), "How small a part of the boundless and unfathomable time (*aion*) is assigned to every man!"

Again, in iv., 21, he speaks of the bodies of preceding generations as "buried in time (*aion*) so remote."

We are now in a position to see how there could be, without absurdity, a transition of *aion* (time) into the sense eternity; for, when it is qualified by adjectives denoting totality, it acquires the sense eternity. All past time is past eternity. All future time is future eternity. All time past, present, and future, is absolute eternity. At first this qualifying adjective was expressed, as we see in Marcus Aurelius. But by degrees it came to be sometimes *implied* and *understood*, but not expressed, and *aion*, *with this understanding*, was used for eternity. Marcus Aurelius almost always expresses the qualifying adjective, but, in one or two instances, he implies it, and *aion* alone stands for eternity. Thus (vi., 36), "The present time is a point in (universal) time," i. e., eternity (*aion*). The same process is seen in Diodorus Siculus, who, in the introduction to his history (i., 1), qualifies *aion*, and says that "Divine providence has its circuit through *all* time (*aion*), and by worlds and seasons creates common relations among men, and causes every age so to revolve as to assign a destined end to each." Here the qualifying adjective is used; but in his statement of theories of the origin of mankind, he

introduces it once and omits it once. Thus he says (lib. i., § 6): "There are two theories as to the origin of men: one that the world was uncreated and immortal, and that men existed from (all) time (*aion*), and had no beginning of their generation; the other, that all men, by the weakness of nature, live but a small part of *all* time (*aion*), and perish for all after-time." In this case, the qualifying adjective is expressed once and omitted once, but the sense in each case is the same. Thus the expression *eis ton aiona* came sometimes to mean for all time, that is, forever, and to eternity. In such cases, Cremer says that it means "for the future," that is, for *all time* to come. In such a case the article is commonly used.

But this same form, that may thus denote eternity, may also denote *for an age*, or *for a dispensation*, in other circumstances.

The transition from the sense life to time and from time to eternity can thus be explained by actual facts. But suppose that the word had, as alleged, begun with the idea eternity. How could it ever have reached the sense life, not including time or eternity? What links could there be for such a transition? The supposition is as much at war with the laws of the mind as it is with actual historical facts.

But, besides this approach to the sense eternity, there is still another of a rhetorical kind, in which *aion* in the plural is taken in the sense of ages, and, by reduplicated ages, approximates to the conception of eternity. Of this I shall soon speak.

There is still another use of *aion*, introduced by Plato to denote a kind of philosophical eternity, from which past, present, and future time are eliminated, and absolute being only is retained. This philosophical speculation is



unknown to *aion* in its earlier centuries, and was developed by those who supposed that it had some meaning, though to common-sense minds it is nonsense.

I have thus shown that an appeal to the ancients, like that of Aristotle, can never sustain the assertion that eternity is the original sense of *aion*. I have shown that for many centuries this sense was unknown, and that it came in only in the later ages of the Greek language. To translate *aion* eternity in the passage of Aristotle which has been considered would do him a great wrong, for it would represent him as ignorantly contradicting the universal usages of those to whom he appeals.

## CHAPTER XVII.

### THE SEPTUAGINT.

BUT the biography of that momentous word, *aion*, would be incomplete if I should neglect to notice its destinies in connection with the Septuagint ; that is, the Greek translation of the Old Testament made at Alexandria, according to tradition, by seventy translators, over four centuries before Christ. Think what it was. It was practically the only Bible of the early church, and it had been in use over four centuries when Christ came. It furnished terms for the theology of the early church. By a careful examination of it we can be sure of the usage of *aion* and *aionios* when Christ came. The word *aion* occurs in it about four hundred times in every variety of combination. The adjective *aionios*, derived from it, is used over one hundred times, and often in circumstances imparting to it an absolute definiteness of meaning; It is always pleasant to pass from the ground of mere opinion to that of absolute certainty. This was never more possible than in the present case.

In this translation *aion* is universally used as the equivalent of *olam*. What, then, is the meaning of *olam* ? Is it eternity ? I answer, no. It is derived from a verb denoting to hide, or to conceal, and denotes a period of time past or future, the boundaries of which are concealed, obscure, unseen, or unknown. So say Taylor and Fürst in

yet Cremer in his last edition new Bevegun  
(in accordance with his former view respecting  
the etymology of *aion*).

their Hebrew Concordances. It is true of eternity, past and future, that their boundaries are unseen and unknown. But it is also true of other undefined periods that are not eternal, and that may be called ages or dispensations. Of *olam* thus viewed *aion* is the universal representative.

Moreover, in the Septuagint the adjective *aionios* for the first time came into extensive use, for previously it had been rarely used in all Greek literature. And as *aion* denoted an age, great or small, so the adjective *aionios* expressed the idea pertaining to or belonging to the *aion*, whether great or small. Cremer, taking *aion* as denoting time, defines *aionios* as "belonging to the *aion*, that is, to time in its movement." But in every case this adjective derives its character and duration from the *aion* to which it refers.

Let us now enter the Hebrew Bible, and the Septuagint version of it, and note the use of *olam* and its equivalent *aion*, and its adjective *aionios*. *Olam* has no Hebrew adjective, but certain forms of it are rendered by the Greek *aionios*. Thus a covenant of *olam* is rendered an *aionian* covenant.

#### CREATION, TIME, AND ETERNITY, IN THE OLD TESTAMENT.

On entering the Old Testament, two great facts strike us—the absolute eternity of God, and the absolute creation of all things by him. There is no self-existent matter, as in the Greek philosophy, to limit the former of the universe, and to give rise to moral evil by its intractable nature, as in the Platonic and Gnostic systems.

Again, we find in the Old Testament no Platonic speculations as to an eternity in which there is no past or future, but one eternal now. On the other hand, all time is divided into the present, the past, and the future. Time, also, is

from a *banal*  
idea!!

divided in two ways: one by the measurements of the solar system, which God is represented as making to measure time by days, hours, weeks, months, and years; the other by indefinite periods.

## OLAM.

This indefinite division of time is represented by *olam* (Greek, *aion*). Hence we find, since there are many ages or periods, that the word is used in the plural. Moreover, since one great period or age can comprehend under it subordinate ages, we find such expressions as an age of ages, or an *olam* of *olams*, or an *aion* of *aions*, and other reduplications.

## OLAM AND TEMPORARY AGES.

Of the fact that *olam* is used to denote limited periods, notice has been often taken in incidental cases; such as, "He shall be his servant forever;" i. e., for his *olam* or his *aion*, in this case his life (Ex. xxi. 5). But no proper notice has been taken of the extent and variety of this usage. Let us, then, take a general survey of temporary ages, and of the application of *olam* and *aion* to them.

There are six ages, or aggregates of ages, involving temporary systems, spoken of in the Old Testament.

These ages are distinctly stated to be temporary, and yet to them all are applied *olam* and *aion* and their reduplications, as fully and as emphatically as they are to God. This is positive demonstration that the word *olam*, as is confirmed by Taylor and Fürst in their Hebrew Concordances, means an indefinite period or age, past or future, and not an absolute eternity. When applied to God, the idea of eternity is derived from him and not from the word.

## MATERIAL SYSTEM.

1. The first temporary system that occurs is that of the

material universe. The Bible teaches the absolute creation of all things out of nothing. It also teaches the ultimate passing away of the system, especially in those sublime passages, Ps. cii., 25-27, and Is. li., 6: "They shall perish, but thou shalt endure; yea all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed, but thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end." "Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath; for the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old as a garment, and they that dwell therein shall die in like manner." I call attention to these definite statements, that they may be compared with the words said to denote an absolute future eternity, when applied, as they often are, to the material system.

Of this an instance occurs in Ps. cxlviii. 6, in which it is said of the sun, moon, and stars, and the whole system, "He hath established them forever and ever (*eis ton aiona kai eis ton aiona tou aionos*), he hath made a decree that shall not pass." The same is said in Ps. civ. 5, with great emphasis, "He laid the foundations of the earth that it should not be removed forever and ever." See, also, Eccl. i. 4, "The earth abideth forever." The same is repeated in Ps. lxxxix., again and again, as to the sun and moon, v. 28-37. In all these cases *olam* and *aion* are used. They denote the great but indefinite and unknown period of the heavens and the earth.

#### PAST AGES.

2. We next notice the system of past ages, before and since the creation, up to the time then present. The existence of ages before the creation is distinctly brought out in that sublime passage, Prov. viii. 22-29, when Wisdom

says, "I was from everlasting, before the earth was." Of these past ages in the great abyss of past eternity, there is only an indefinite knowledge given in the Word of God. But they are often referred to. Besides these ages there are others since the creation, down to the days of the inspired writers, to which they refer as the past *olams*, *aions*, or ages.

I call attention also to the fact that to these past ages, even those since the creation, the same terms are applied that are said to denote absolute eternity. See Jer. ii. 20, "*Of old time* I have broken thy yoke," and Prov. viii. 23, "I was set up *from everlasting*." In these passages, the same word, *olam*, is used to denote the eternity of Wisdom, and the time of the early ages of the Jewish nation. In both cases it is *from olam*.

So also in Ps. xciii. 2, "Thou art from everlasting" (*from olam*), the same identical forms of *olam* and *aion* are used to denote the eternity of God that are used in Gen. vi. 4, to denote the antiquity of the mighty antediluvian giants, or in Josh. xxiv. 2, to denote the antiquity of the ancestors of Abraham, on the other side of the flood; or in 1 Sam. xxvii. 8, to denote the ancient ages of the inhabitants of Canaan and the parts adjacent. In every one of these cases it is *from olam*; Septuagint, *from aion*.

## ABRAHAMIC COVENANT.

3. We note next the Abrahamic or patriarchal system, founded on a covenant with Abraham, and which in its final results was to bless all the families of the earth in his seed. This covenant included also the possession of the land of Canaan by his descendants. I call particular attention to this system, and the covenant, and the possession of the promised land, for the terms *olam* and *aionios*, said to

denote eternity, are applied to them with great emphasis. See Gen. xiii. 5, and xvii. 7, 8, and 13 and 19. Here, in the Septuagint, the covenant is said to be *aionian*, and so is the inheritance of the land. See also Jer. vii. 7, and xxv. 5.

#### MOSAIC SYSTEM.

4. The Mosaic typical and ceremonial system was introduced by the deliverance of the Israelites from Egypt, and by their organization in the wilderness. This was followed by the conquest of the promised land, and the establishment of the system in it. It was designed to be, and was, in fact, a temporary system, and its passing away was clearly foretold. Especially do I call attention to this system since in all its parts the words *olam* and *aionios*, said to denote eternity, are applied to it abundantly and with great emphasis. The Mosaic covenant was *olamic* and *aionian*. So was the priesthood; so was every ordinance and rite. The Passover was an *aionian* ordinance, and, if *olam* and *aion* mean absolute eternity, it was ordained unto eternity. The same was true as to olive-oil in the lamps, as to the priests wearing linen breeches, as to the heave-offering, as to the priests washing hands and feet at the laver, as to the Sabbath, as to not eating fat or blood, as to the meat-offering, as to the priests not drinking wine or strong drink, as to the shew-bread, as to the great day of atonement; all these, and other ordinances, too numerous to mention, are eternal ordinances, by the same words that declare the eternity of God—*olam*, *aion*, and *aionios*.

#### MESSIANIC KINGDOM.

5. There is presented also the future Messianic system under which redemption is completed, and the kingdom of God is established in this world. I call attention to the

fact that it is clearly said to be established in this temporary world, both in Dan. vii. and in Rev. xxi. and xxii. The Ancient of Days comes, and judgment is given to the saints, and the time comes that the saints possess the kingdom. This is the kingdom elsewhere represented as given in this world to the Son of Man, that all peoples, nations, and languages, should serve him. This kingdom is therefore temporary, as this world is. Yet to this kingdom are applied the terms said to denote eternity. It is said the saints of the Most High shall, in this world, take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom forever, even forever and ever. So many and so various are the temporary ages and dispensations characterized by *olam* and *aionios*.

## COVENANT WITH NOAH.

6. Besides these, there is also the covenant with Noah, after the flood, in its scope embracing the natural world and all its inhabitants, man and beasts, for all future generations; giving a guarantee against another flood, and insuring the perpetuity of the seasons. Of this covenant the rainbow was the sign. It deserves particular notice that to this covenant, also, are applied the terms that are said to denote eternity. It is *olamic* and *aionian* (Gen. ix. 12-16).

These designations of ages are in Hebrew, for the most part forms of the word *olam*. In a few instances other words are used. But, as a general fact, to denote indefinite ages or periods, *olam* is the term used; and of *olam*, *aion* is the general translation.

## DEVELOPMENT OF "AIONIOS."

We are now prepared to understand the peculiar development of the word *aionios*, used by our Lord in his account of the judgment. It was developed and became a common



word, by the Septuagint translation of the Old Testament into Greek. Before the times of Plato it was a very rare word in classic Greek. It does not occur in Homer or in Pindar, and very rarely, if at all, in the dramatic writers, or in the orators, and historians. It was first made a common word in popular religious use by the Septuagint. Its origin was this: When *olam* was governed by the preceding noun, it was translated as an adjective, and instead of *aion*, *aionios* was used. Thus a covenant of *olam* is translated an *aionian* covenant, and not a covenant of *aion*. Hence, in the Mosaic ritual, its usage became very frequent. It was also used in many other cases, till it must have been a household word.

#### THE QUESTION.

Here, now, we are brought face to face with an extended use of the word *aionios*, the same word that was used by Christ in the judgment. Occurring so often in the Septuagint, with regard to all the rites of the Mosaic system, and other dispensations spoken of in the Bible, it must have been one of the most familiar words. What, then, did it mean to the readers of the Septuagint? What did it mean in common life? To this question two answers can be given. One has already been stated. It assumes the falsely alleged Aristotelian sense of *aion* as denoting absolute eternity, and declares that the original and primary sense of *aionios* is eternal.

To this we reply that the original and primary sense of *aion* was not eternity, as has been shown, and that the word derived its sense not from classic Greek, but from *olam*, in the Old Testament; and again we say that the assumption of this sense fills the Old Testament with contradictions, for it would make it declare the absolute eternity of systems which it often and emphatically declares to be tem-

porary. Nor can it be said that *aionios* denotes lasting as long as the nature of things permits. The Mosaic ordinances might have lasted at least to the end of the world, but did not. The possession of Palestine might have lasted to the end of the world, but did not. Moreover, on this principle, the exceptions to the true sense of the word exceed its proper use ; for, in the majority of cases in the Old Testament, *aionios* is applied to that which is limited and temporary.

One other view is possible : that *aionios* means *pertaining to an age or dispensation*. It may also mean *pertaining to ages or dispensations*. This view is sustained by the fact that there are cases in which no other sense is possible.

INSTANCES.

Take the case of a familiar proverb, in Prov. xxii. 28 : "Remove not the ancient landmarks, which thy fathers have set." In Hebrew it is, remove not the landmarks of *olam* ; in the Greek it is, remove not the *aionian* landmarks. Here our translators saw at once the folly of translating *aionios* eternal, as applied to landmarks which the fathers of the Jewish nation had placed, and which could be easily removed. They saw that they were simply the landmarks of former ages, placed by the fathers, and therefore they translated *aionios* *ancient*, and not *eternal*. Here the sense *existing in, or pertaining to past ages*, is absolutely necessary in translating *aionios*. The word *aionios* means pertaining to, or existing in, an age or ages. The context shows whether the age is past or future.

Take another case. The prophet Jeremiah, in a time of apostacy to idolatry, commands the nation to ask for the *old* paths of the founders of the nation. What does he call the old paths ? They are the paths of *olam*. What

are they called in the Septuagint? They are called the *aionian* paths. The context at once shows that these paths were those of the early ages, as they were established by Moses. Hence they called them the old paths, that is, the paths of the early ages. Here *aionios* must mean pertaining to the former ages.

So in Ps. lxxvii. 5, Asaph, reviewing the works of God in the earlier ages of Jewish history, calls them the years of the *olams*; the Septuagint calls them the *aionian* years; our translators call them the years of ancient times. The most exact sense is the years of former ages. So, in two other instances, in Is. lviii. 12, and lxi. 4, the ancient ruins of Jerusalem that are to be rebuilt are called *aionian*, that is, the ruins of former ages. In our translation they are called old waste places. It deserves notice, also, that the new foundations to be laid are called *aionian*. This cannot mean lasting as long even as the world, for soon after Christ they were subverted. *Aionian* in this case denotes only foundations for future ages, just as elsewhere it denotes past ages.

There are many other cases in which the sense "pertaining to the age, or the ages," is necessary to avoid contradiction. On the other hand, in all cases this meaning makes good sense, and avoids all inconsistency. Introduce eternal, as the translation of *aionios*, and all the laws and dispensations which are elsewhere spoken of in the Old Testament as temporary, like the covenants with Noah and Abraham and the Mosaic ritual, are called eternal. The system of this world is declared in the strongest language to be eternal, and to endure forever.

On the other hand, let *olam*, or *aion*, denote an age or a dispensation, and *aionios* mean pertaining to an age, and all is consistent and harmonious. Now, the *aionian* covenant

with Noah is simply a covenant pertaining to the coming ages of the world. The *aionian* covenant with Abraham is a covenant for the future ages of this world. The *aionian* covenant and ordinances of the Mosaic dispensation are not eternal, but for the ages until the coming of Christ. The *aionian* inheritance of the promised land becomes an inheritance for coming ages.

Even in the case of God himself, the same translation would hold good. The *aionian* God is now the God of the ages. This mode of denoting God is used in the sublime passage, 1 Tim. i. 17, in which God is called the King eternal, immortal, invisible. In the original, the King eternal is designated as the King of the ages (*aions*). A similar usage occurs in Ecclesiasticus, in which God is called "the God of the ages," and in Tobit xiii. 6, in which he is called "the King of the ages."

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### *THE PESHITO.*

HAVING particularly considered the testimony of Aristotle, and of classic Greek, and of the Septuagint, I shall proceed to other evidence of the meaning of the word *aionios*, as used by Christ in the judgment. This is found in the Peshito, a Syriac version of the Greek Testament, the earliest version after Christ.

#### PROF. TAYLER LEWIS.

We are indebted, for what we shall say on this version, to that eminent scholar Prof. Tayler Lewis. To see the full force of it, it is necessary to state first his own views of the word *aionios*. They are found in a profound development of the use of what he calls the *Olamic* or *Æonian* words of the Scripture. He complains, and that justly, that their Scriptural use is hidden by our translation. His views will be found on pp. 44–51 of Lange’s “Commentary on Ecclesiastes,” and also pp. 135–143 of the “Commentary on Genesis.”

#### VIEWS OF PROF. LEWIS.

He very correctly assumes that *aion* has the sense of an age, that is, a period of time. He regards the boundless duration of God as filled with successive ages or dispensations. These ages were numberless before our world

was created; during this world there are ages, and there will be numberless ages after its close.

#### SCRIPTURAL NAMES.

The usual Scriptural names of these ages are *Olam* in Hebrew, and *Aion* in Greek. These words are, in themselves, wholly indefinite, and the ages may vary greatly in length. They are not measured by ordinary astronomical computations of time, as days, months, years. (*See Lange's "Genesis,"* p. 141, note.)

#### USE OF THE AGES.

Now, in this state of things, two modes are conceivable of impressing the mind with the magnitude of the duration of God and his kingdom: to use simple negations of beginning or end, leaving eternity, past and future, an undivided blank, or, to fill the mind with the conception of innumerable ages, past or future, and to reduplicate the expression "by ages of ages."

He insists upon it that this latter mode of speaking is the Scriptural mode, and that it affects the mind more with approximate conceptions of eternity than what he calls conceptionless, negative words.

#### NEITHER DENOTES ETERNITY.

But he insists that this use of *olam* and *aion*, in the plural to denote ages, and ages of ages, implies of necessity that neither of the words, of itself, denotes eternity. He admits that these words are used to give an idea of eternity, as applied to God and his kingdom, while yet the ages that are reduplicated are themselves finite, but by their magnitude and number raise an impressive approximate conception of eternity. (*See Lange's "Ecclesiastes,"* pp. 45, 50.)

## RESULT.

In view of these facts we need not be surprised at finding in Prof. Tayler Lewis the following clear development of the logical result of these views. He says: "The preacher, in contending with the Universalist and the Restorationist, would commit an error, and it may be suffer a failure in his argument, should he lay the whole stress of it on the etymological or historical significance of the words *aion*, *aionios*, and attempt to prove that of themselves they necessarily carry the meaning of endless duration" (Lange's "Ecclesiastes," p. 48). What, then, does *aionios* here mean? He says that it means *pertaining to the age or world to come*, taking *world* in the time-sense, and thus translates the passage. "These shall go away into the punishment [the restraint, imprisonment] of the world to come, and these into the life of the world to come," and he adds, emphatically, "*that is all that we can etymologically or exegetically make of the word in this passage.*"

## THE PESHITO.

It is in support of this translation that he appeals to the venerable Syriac version, the Peshito.

The Peshito is, as we have said, the earliest version of the New Testament. Its value and authority it is not easy to over-estimate. Westcott says: "Gregory Bar Hebræus, one of the most learned and accurate of Syrian writers, relates that the New Testament Peshito was 'made in the time of Thaddeus (the apostle), and Abgarus, King of Edessa,' when, according to the universal opinion of ancient writers, the apostle went to proclaim Christianity in Mesopotamia" (Canon, p. 259). He adds that Gregory assumes the apostolic origin of the New Testament Peshito as cer-

tain, and that it preceded all the sects of the Syrian Church, and was received and appealed to by all.

How, then, was *aionios* translated by this version? In support of his own translation Prof. Tayler Lewis says, "So is it ever (translated) in the old Syriac version, where the one rendering is still more unmistakably clear." "These shall go into the pain of the *Olam* (the world to come), and these to the life of the *Olam* (the world to come)." He refers to many other passages, as Matt. xix. 16; Mark x. 17; Luke xviii. 18; John iii. 15; Acts xiii. 46; 1 Tim. vi. 12, in which *aionios* is rendered *belonging to the Olam*, the world to come. In all these cases we find in our version, *eternal life*, the same words that are used in the sentence of the judge, but in all they are rendered in the Peshito, the life of the world to come; and such, he tells us, is the rendering in all similar cases. Certainly, evidence more direct and conclusive it is hard to imagine.

#### AIM OF PROF. LEWIS.

We are not to suppose that so eminent an orthodox divine says these things in support of Universalism, a system which he decidedly and earnestly rejects. He says them in behalf of what he conceives to be the truth in philology, and rests for proof of eternal punishment on the finality of the whole aspect of the scene, and the absence of any reason to look for a reversal of the sentence. But he is unwilling to support what he regards as a true doctrine with false arguments. Besides the idea of finality in the judgment, he would doubtless derive arguments from other sources.

#### CHANGE OF POSITION.

Nevertheless, if we admit the validity of the evidence adduced by him, and certainly nothing can have higher



claims to confidence than this ancient apostolic version, and the argument that sustains him seems to be irrefragable, yet it effects a fundamental change in the position of the whole question, for it is now fair to raise the question, What is the life, and what is the punishment, of the world to come? Is that punishment ultimate annihilation after deserved suffering? Still it would be the punishment of the world to come. Will it be a long-continued but remedial punishment? Still it will be the punishment of the world to come. This translation leaves the question between the three theories undecided. Eternal torment is now only one supposition out of three, and we are not by the sentence of Christ shut up to the belief of it. It may be proved from other sources. But these words of Christ are no longer the main bulwark in defense of that doctrine.

So, also, the argument that the punishment is characterized by the same word as the life, loses its power to prove eternal punishment. The allegation is true. But what does it prove? Solely that, as the life is of the world to come, so is the punishment.

#### FIDELITY TO TRUTH.

The fact that these results conflict with the generally-accepted statements of the defenders of eternal punishment should not, however, tend to produce a reaction against that eminent orthodox scholar and divine by whom they are sustained, nor against the learned, scholarly, and Christian work in which they are published.

We trust that the time will come when, in all departments of history and philology, men will write, not for denomination or party, but for the truth; when the inquiry will not be, what will this or that sect say of this, but what

will God say of it, to whom all suppression of the truth and all pious fraud are an abomination.

## PROPER COURSE.

The proper course to pursue with reference to the statements of Prof. Lewis is to compare them with other usages of language in the early Christian ages, and see if his results accord with general usage to such an extent as to give them an aspect of general verisimilitude. For there is something striking and peculiar in such an idea as "the life of the world to come." If this was a common mode of thought, we should be likely to meet it elsewhere. Is Prof. Tayler Lewis's view sustained by any other ancient and authoritative usage? There are many ancient creeds. Do we find any traces of it in them? Are there any facts in the writings of the ancient fathers which imply that they understood Christ to be speaking of the life and the punishment *of the world to come*, in the sentence of the judgment-day? To these questions we propose to give careful attention, for they reach the heart of the whole momentous inquiry.

## CHAPTER XIX.

### PROF. LEWIS—THE CREEDS—THE FATHERS.

WE have seen that Prof. Tayler Lewis has come to the conclusion that, in the sentence of our Saviour on the judgment-day, the word *aionios* means *pertaining to the world to come*, and not eternal and everlasting, as it is translated. We have seen that he claims the Peshito as on his side. We have seen that this effects a change of position in the whole subject, allowing us to raise the question: "What is the life, and what the punishment, of the world to come? Is it ultimate annihilation after just punishment, or final restoration after severe remedial punishment, or endless suffering?"

We have said that the proper course in this case is not to be excited or react against him, but to compare his results with the language of the early creeds and of the fathers, and to see if there is such an agreement as to produce a sense of verisimilitude.

Let us, then, proceed and consider those creeds that include the results of the judgment in their articles of faith, at least so far as *aionian* life is concerned.

#### IMPORTANCE AND AUTHORITY OF ANCIENT CREEDS.

There is a special reason for looking to the ancient creeds for light on this question. They do not go into metaphysical systems as do some of the later creeds, but confine themselves to the great facts that cluster around

the incarnation of Christ, his life, sufferings, death, and resurrection, and coming to judge the world. They include also our resurrection, judgment, and awards. The public creeds generally mention the awards of life, and say nothing of punishment. Some early creeds, drawn up by individuals, mention both. Two of the earliest creeds use the very words of Christ, *aionian life*; other creeds throw light on their sense, especially on the sense of the word *aionios*. This kind of evidence is as direct and authoritative as is possible. It is the testimony of the early Church, speaking in her creeds.

#### PRINCIPLES OF REASONING.

If we state a self-evident principle, it may prepare the way. If, then, *aionian life* was introduced into the earliest creeds, and if *aionios* was held to mean everlasting or eternal, and if the idea was felt to be of fundamental importance, it is highly improbable, not to say impossible, that in subsequent creeds it should be dropped, and in place of it the idea "pertaining to the world to come" should be introduced. If the creeds began with the idea everlasting, it could not have been universally dropped, and another idea taken in its place, without protest and without controversy.

#### THE FACTS.

Now, what are the facts? They are these: The earlier creeds introduce "*aionios*" to qualify *life*. The later creeds drop it, and in place of it introduce the idea "*of the world to come*," as a perfect equivalent to *aionios*. Thus the early creeds say, "I believe in the *aionian life*;" the later creeds say as a perfect equivalent, "I believe in *the life of the world to come*;" and this change was made without controversy or protest.

## EARLY CREEDS.

The earliest creed is that which is called the Apostles' Creed. It is used in the Episcopal Prayer-Book, and is recognized by all denominations. The closing article of this creed is, "I believe in the resurrection of the body, and the *aionian life*" (*aionios*). The creed of the Church of Jerusalem, also, which was a very early creed, closes in the same way.

Here, now, we have the very words used by Christ, *zoe aionios*, introduced as an article of faith in two of the earliest creeds. If, now, *aionios* means "*eternal*" here, how can it in subsequent creeds assume the form "*of the world to come?*" But where does it assume that form? We reply, at the close of the completed Nicene Creed.

## NICENE CREED.

The Nicene Creed is the first great œcumenical creed established by a council of the early church. In it the doctrine of the supreme divinity of Christ was promulgated, and the foundation laid of the church doctrine of the Trinity, in the year 325. Afterward, at Constantinople, in the year 381, this creed was confirmed and completed by the more full development of the doctrine concerning the divinity of the Holy Spirit, thus fully developing the doctrine of the Trinity. This is the creed which the American Episcopal Church has introduced into its Prayer-Book in the place of the Athanasian Creed which was omitted. It is, therefore, a very prominent and important creed. It is in this that the expression "life of the world to come" is used as an equivalent to the *aionian life*. The last article of this creed is, "I look for the resurrection of the dead, and *the life of the world to come.*" The connection of the resurrection and the awards of the

judgment is so intimate that we cannot avoid the conclusion that these words refer to the life spoken of by the judge on that day. It is called *the* life of the world to come, as one of the great results of the judgment which must be well known to all. Now, if this is the true meaning of *zoe aionios*, in the great award, it is easy to account for this usage in the Nicene Creed. It simply presents in another form the true meaning of the award of Christ to the righteous on the great day of retribution. This is worthy of such a place of honor in the creed. If, now, the word *aionios* was universally understood to mean everlasting, it is utterly improbable that that idea would be dropped in any creed and a different one taken in its place. But, if *zoe aionios* was universally understood to mean the life of the world to come, then the Nicene Creed did not drop the idea, but, as we have said, simply used another mode of expressing it, which was a little more stately and impressive.

## OTHER CREEDS.

That this was the prevailing, or rather universal sense attached to this last article of the early creeds, is obvious, from the fact that it is introduced in the same place in other creeds besides the Nicene. In the apostolic constitutions a creed is given to be used in the reception of members to the church. It has, of course, no apostolic authority, but it fairly represents the general and early usage in the church. At the close of this creed all the church are represented as believing in the resurrection and *the life of the world to come*. This shows clearly how general and how familiar this mode of expression was, and that it was the true idea of the Church in all her creeds.

The same thing is clearly shown in the creed presented

by Arius to Constantine, in proof of his orthodoxy. In this, his aim, of course, must have been to come as near to the universally recognized orthodox expressions as possible. Accordingly, he professes his belief in the resurrection and *the life of the world to come*.

#### HARMONY OF CONFESSIONS.

It must not be forgotten that alongside of all these later creeds the Apostles' Creed was everywhere used, professing faith in the resurrection and in the *aionian life*. If it had not been felt that the sense was exactly the same, plainly the concord of confessions would have been felt to be interrupted, and the question must have arisen, Which is the true idea? But no such question arose; no disagreement of sense was perceived. Whichever creed was cited, all seemed to feel that they professed one and the same thing. This coincidence of idea between the ancient creeds and the Syriac version, which, as has been stated, always speaks of the life of the world to come, as denoted by *aionios zoe*, seems to be decisive of the generally-accepted meaning of what is translated, life everlasting, in the Apostles' Creed. It should, therefore, be translated *life of the world to come*, in the Apostles' Creed, even in the Prayer-Book, so as to agree with the other creeds as a profession of faith in the life of the world to come, because this is the true sense.

So much for public creeds. Let us now consider certain creeds drawn up by individuals whose sentiments are well-known.

#### INDIVIDUAL CREEDS.

Of these, we shall refer to two, one by Irenæus, and the other by Origen. I refer to these creeds for this reason, that they throw light on their understanding of the

word *aionios*, translated eternal. It will be conceded that, if a writer openly declares the punishment of the wicked to be *eternal suffering*, he will not immediately proceed to represent them as finally annihilated, or as ultimately restored to holiness, for this would involve a contradiction too gross to escape his notice.

## CREED OF IRENÆUS.

But it is true that Irenæus, in a creed drawn up by him, and designed to give a summary of the great facts in which the whole Church is agreed, does, in fact, use the word *aionios* to describe the punishment of the wicked. Now, if he understood this as meaning simply the punishment of the world to come, he would feel at perfect liberty to proceed and set forth the suffering and the final annihilation of the wicked, for this would but define the nature of the punishment of the world to come.

What, then, are the facts as to Irenæus? Since he has been canonized as a saint, and since he stood in such close connection with Polycarp and with John the apostle, there has been a very great reluctance to admit the real facts of the case. Massuetus has employed much sophistry in endeavoring to hide them. Nevertheless, as we shall clearly show hereafter, they are incontrovertibly these: that he taught a final restitution of all things to unity and order by the annihilation of all the finally impenitent. Express statements of his in his creed, and in a fragment referred to by Prof. Schaff, on universal restoration ("History," vol. i., p. 490), and in other parts of his great work against the Gnostics, prove this beyond all possibility of refutation. The inference from this is plain. He did not understand *aionios* in the sense eternal, but in the sense claimed by Prof. Lewis; that is, pertaining to the world



to come. He held that wicked men and devils would be consigned to the punishment of the world to come, and that this, at a time to be decided by the wisdom and justice of God, would result in their annihilation, and thus in cleansing the universe from every form of sin.

#### CREED OF ORIGEN.

The case of Origen is no less striking and conclusive. As an introduction to his system of theology, he states certain great facts as a creed believed by all the Church. In these he states the doctrine of future retribution as *aionian* life and *aionian* punishment, using the words of Christ. Now, if Origen understood *aionios* in the sense pertaining to the world to come, there would be nothing to prevent him from regarding *aionian* punishment as a remedial punishment destined to result in the ultimate restoration of all to holiness. On the other hand, if he understood *aionios* as meaning strictly eternal, then to pursue such a course would involve him in gross and palpable self-contradiction. But no one can hide the facts of the case. After setting forth the creed of the Church as already stated, including *aionian* punishment, he forthwith proceeds, with elaborate reasoning, again and again to prove the doctrine of universal restoration.

The conclusion from these facts is obvious. Origen did not understand *aionios* as meaning eternal, but rather as meaning pertaining to the world to come.

#### CASE OF THE EMPEROR JUSTINIAN.

Other cases of a like kind could be adduced, but these are sufficient, at least for the present. Yet there is one case so striking that it deserves special mention, though it

involves an anticipation of some facts of history in order to understand its full force.

Some centuries, then, after the death of Origen, that great theologian in his own esteem, the Emperor Justinian, directed Mennas, the Patriarch of Constantinople, to call a local council in the year 544 to condemn the errors of Origen. Among these errors was the doctrine of universal restoration. Justinian, in his letter to Mennas, presents an elaborate argument against that doctrine among others, and concludes it with a careful statement of the true faith. Here, now, was a call for an unambiguous word to denote *eternal*, as applied to life and punishment. The emperor, writing in Greek, had his choice of words. What word, then, from the full vocabulary of Greece, did he select? Did he rely on the word *aionios* as, of itself, sufficient for his purpose? Not at all. As if aware that it could denote simply "pertaining to the world to come," he prefixes to it a word properly denoting eternal, so that his language is this, "The Holy Church of Christ teaches an *endless aionian* life to the righteous, and *endless* punishment to the wicked." Here the word used to denote endless in both cases is *ateleutetos*. In the case of punishment he omits *aionios* entirely. To denote the endless life of the righteous he uses the same unambiguous word *ateleutetos*, but prefixes it to *aionios*. But when he thus said the Church teaches an endless *aionian* life to the righteous, did he mean so flat a tautology as an *endless endless* life? Or did he prefix to *the life of the world to come*, as used in the creeds, a word that truly denotes eternal?

It deserves, also, particular notice, that, in a deliberate and formal effort to characterize the punishment of the wicked as strictly eternal, he does not rely on or use the

word *aionios* at all, but employs an entirely different word, *ateleutetos*.

There was good reason for the distrust of Justinian of the power of the word *aionios* to express endless life and endless punishment. One of his contemporaries, the philosopher Olympiodorus, had pointedly used the word as directly opposed to endless punishment, and denoting a limited period. Speaking of the punishments of Tartarus, he says, "Do not suppose that the soul is punished for endless *aions* (*ἀτελείους αἰῶνας*) in Tartarus. Very properly, the soul is not punished to gratify the revenge of the divinity, but for the sake of healing. But we say that the soul is punished for an *aionion* period (*αἰωνίως*), calling its life, and its allotted period of punishment, its *aion*." Of the very worst, he says that they need a second life, and a second period of punishment, to be made perfectly pure, and that Plato called this double period their *aion*. With this distinct denial of endless punishment before his eyes, and a recognition in its place of *aionian* punishment as the direct antithesis to it, how could Justinian express endless punishment except by another word denoting endlessness?

This usage of Olympiodorus coincides in principle with that of Dr. Tayler Lewis. *Aionian* punishment is for an age, or *aion*. Besides, the view of Prof. Lewis is in striking accordance with the usages of ancient creeds and ancient fathers, and has a verisimilitude so remarkable as to satisfy even a skeptical mind. It is a new instance of that linguistic sagacity for which he is so highly distinguished.

Our purpose can now be seen. We have aimed to open the way for a true understanding of the opinions of the fathers as to the meaning of the words of Christ at the

judgment, and to show that they did not feel themselves bound by them to the belief of the eternity of future punishments.

That purpose we have effected by evidence of the highest kind, amounting to philological demonstration.

It does not prove that they are not eternal. There may be evidence from other sources that they are so. But, by the words of Christ in the judgment, the early fathers did not feel themselves bound to any particular view, and, accordingly, thought and reasoned freely on the whole subject.

## CHAPTER XX.

### *THE AGE OF FREE THOUGHT AND INQUIRY.*

WE have arrived, by our previous discussions, at the result that the early fathers so understood the words of Christ in the sentence of the day of judgment, that they were free to adopt different views as to the duration of the sufferings of the wicked. By this the way has been prepared to take a preliminary view of the state of thought and feeling on future retributions in the centuries before the age of Justinian, in the sixth century. Then, for the first time, the doctrine of future restoration was condemned by a council, not œcumenical, but local. This too, was more the arbitrary act of Justinian than the result of any free movement of the intellectual leaders of the Church.

#### SUCH A VIEW INDISPENSABLE.

To any intelligent understanding of the history of opinion on this subject, a clear understanding of the state of feeling among the leaders of the churches in those ages is indispensable. As every painting must have a background and a ground-color as indispensable to set forth the leading figures to be represented, so in an historical painting of past ages there is the same necessity. There must be an historical background and ground-color, or the actors of history cannot be truly presented or seen.

There is a constant and powerful tendency to carry the feelings and opinions of this age back to the early ages. The whole evangelical Church is now sensitive on the subject of eternal punishment, especially in America. It was the influence of the American clergy that induced the Evangelical Alliance to introduce a belief in eternal punishment into their creed, when otherwise it would have been omitted. In this country elaborate controversial works have been written on it by Chauncey and the second Edwards, and their successors. *Aionios* has been profoundly discussed by the aid of the concordance and dictionaries. Public debates have been held, and the whole community aroused and filled with intense emotion. The weight of the creeds of recent ages rests upon the churches.

There is a constant tendency to carry back this state of things to the early ages. Such statements as are made by Hagenbach, whom Prof. Shedd has followed, do not correct the illusion, but rather favor it. But a greater falsehood in history is not possible than is involved in transferring the feelings and views of the orthodox bodies of this age back to those early centuries.

#### THE GREAT FACTS.

The great facts of the case were these : There was a universal agreement that, on the final coming of Christ, there would be retributions to the good and to the bad in the world to come. They also held that the punishment of the wicked would be so fearful as to furnish most powerful motives to accept the great salvation presented by Christ.

But as to the nature and duration of the punishment of the wicked there was no established and united opinion, and every man thought, and investigated, and spoke, with

the utmost freedom, and different persons arrived at different results. Some taught the ultimate annihilation of the wicked ; others their ultimate restoration after a long and severe remedial punishment ; others taught the endless punishment of the wicked. As to the numerical proportion of the advocates of these opinions we will speak at another time. The men who arrived at these different results were eminent Christians, as in the case of such men as Irenæus, Tertullian, and Origen. Nor was any penalty of public censure visited on them for their different views. Moreover, they were not assailed by elaborate controversial attacks, such as have been common in our age. On the other hand, they held and promulgated their peculiar views unquestioned and uncensured.

#### REASONS OF THESE FACTS.

It is not hard to discover the reasons of this state of things, and, as these reasons will act as proofs of its existence, we will state some of them :

1. In the first place, then, there were no creeds elaborately wrought out in which any doctrine as to future retribution was distinctly presented. Of this we need to attempt no proof, for no one even pretends that such creeds were in existence.

2. In the second place, there were no fathers to fall back upon whose opinions might supply the want of a creed. It is natural in every age to lean upon the writers of preceding ages. They are its fathers. The Reformers are the fathers of the Protestant churches. New England had its peculiar fathers in Edwards and others of his school. The early teachers of the Church are the fathers of subsequent ages. But who were the fathers of the Church of the first and second centuries ?

3. The writings that came down from the ages before Christ, and which were extensively read, and were very influential in the early centuries, did not tend to produce any fixed and established type of doctrine, since they did not agree among themselves. Our previous exhibition of their views has made this plain. The Sibylline Oracles were extensively read and quoted, and exerted great influence, but these tended to establish the doctrine of universal restoration. Philo was very extensively read, but he taught the annihilation of the wicked. The book of Enoch was widely circulated and read, but it taught neither restoration nor annihilation, but endless punishment, based not on the fall of Adam, but of the angels. What the apocalypse of Ezra was designed to teach it is hard to say. In form, it taught future eternal punishment, based on the fall in Adam, but it filled the mind with unanswerable objections to the doctrine in that form.

4. The sentence of Christ at the day of judgment was not understood to establish any doctrine except the general doctrine that the wicked would be severely punished in the world to come. Whether this would result in annihilation, or restoration, or endless misery, in their view it did not decide. Of this we have already given much proof, and shall soon produce more.

5. So far was it from being true that there was a deep interest, and a united and decided opinion in the churches in favor of any one of these views so that they wished to insert it in a creed, that, though the subject of the reward of the righteous was in every public creed, yet till the days of Justinian the punishment of the wicked was omitted from all creeds established by general or local councils.

6. For centuries there was an intense absorption in other vital questions on which the life of the Church was



dependent, and all who were agreed in these were accepted as in fellowship, whatever might be their diverse views as to the punishment of the wicked. In our war with slavery, for the life of our country, a common interest and common danger united all who were willing to fight for their country. There was a readiness to subordinate all else to a great common interest and common danger. So was it during these early ages in the Church.

That the union of so many and so powerful causes should produce the result we have set forth will seem perfectly natural and inevitable to every thinking man.

#### SUBJECTS OF THOUGHT AND FEELING.

But the strength of this conviction will be increased if we will consider what the subjects were that successively interested the heart and intellect of the Church. Some of these, which were of vital moment in their day, have so far receded from the view of the modern world that they have little conception what they were, or how certain errors could endanger the Church. They look upon them as we do upon the fossilized remains of the geologic ages—with a kind of incredulity as to the fact that they ever could have been alive. This is especially true with respect to the various forms of Gnostic errors.

The course of thought and interest in the early Church was this: 1. To diffuse as widely as possible the great facts of Christianity, such as are recorded in the gospels, and were orally proclaimed by the apostles and early Christians. They did not wait for written gospels, or a completed canon, but gave all their energy to the oral proclamation and dissemination of these great facts.

2. Then came a period in which the defense of Christianity against its enemies and assailants was called for.

Christianity was to be defended as a system against the assaults of Jews and pagans, and against the persecutions of the Roman power. This raised up that class of writers known as the Apologists, among whom Justin Martyr stands conspicuous as one of the earliest and most important. He wrote in the days of Marcus Antoninus, in the second century. He and his fellow-laborers in this cause were united in defending the Christians against the slanders, the arguments, and the persecution of the opponents, whether popular or imperial, for until the fourth century the power of Rome was arrayed against Christianity, and by it he suffered a martyr's death. Hence he has ever been held in high honor, though he did teach the ultimate annihilation of the wicked.

## GNOSTICISM.

3. Then they were called to meet a wide-spread effort to invalidate the great facts of Christianity, or to frame false systems of the universe out of them. Christ was retained in name, but the reality of his incarnation was questioned or denied on philosophical grounds. The fact that Christianity was a true development of the Old Testament was denied. By many it was asserted that the God of the Old Testament, the Creator of this world, was not the true God, but an evil spirit who had enslaved men in matter. All vulnerable points of the Old Testament were assailed, as showing the evil character of the God who made the world. Christ came, they asserted, to deliver men from his power. They framed new systems of the universe, into which they wove Christ. All this and much more they did with the assumption of a high degree of rationalism and insight. *They* looked into the nature of things; *Christians* were unintelligent believers in the letter. These

were the Gnostics, i. e., the rational, intelligent, advanced party. For a long period it was necessary to encounter them and to defend Christianity against their false constructions and denials. It was during this war that the great elementary facts of Christianity were framed into the Apostles' Creed. The great leader in this war was Irenæus of Lyons, in the second century. He defended the great facts of Christianity, and refuted the allegations of the Gnostics, and did such service to the Church that in all ages he has been honored and revered as a saint. Yet he held to the doctrine of the annihilation of the wicked. Did it awaken odium or lead to controversy? Not at all. The Church was waging a war for the vital elements of Christianity, and in that war he was a faithful and valiant leader, and that was enough. They were absorbed in the great controversy of the age, and had no disposition to raise a controversy on other points held by men with whom they were standing shoulder to shoulder in a great conflict for the very essence of Christianity.

#### THE TRINITY AND THE PERSON OF CHRIST.

4. Then came the development of the three persons of the Trinity, as set forth in the baptismal formula. Origen led the way in this discussion. Arius denied the supreme divinity of Christ, and a great controversy arose, which led to the first general council, called by Constantine the Great, in 325. From this point the emperor became a party and often the arbiter in doctrinal questions, and a period of bondage to the civil power begins, the malignant influences of which the world still feels. During this controversy the intellect and emotions of the Church were absorbed in it. All who were true to the orthodox side were accepted, whatever their views of future retribution.

5. Then came the great controversies as to the person of Christ, which absorbed all minds, divided the Church, and shook the empire. The orthodox creed was promulgated and completed at Chalcedon, and fidelity to it covered all sins and all errors. Hence it is that Gregory of Nyssa, who powerfully defended it, though a decided advocate of universal restoration, escaped unscathed, and died as a saint in the odor of holiness.

## CONSEQUENCES.

Hence we can account for such great facts as these, that up to the time of Justinian no article as to future punishment was introduced into any creed, but only an article as to the life of the world to come, and that up to that date no great *controversial* work on future retribution had been written by any one, on any side. All that is said on the subject is said incidentally, or in hortatory and practical works. Origen's work on the principles of theology is the nearest to an exception to this statement. But this is not written controversially, and by far the greater part of the work is occupied with other themes. But it is a striking fact that, though the positions of Origen were clearly stated, and also his reasons for them, in his own works, no one undertook a formal argumentative reply to him. What the Emperor Justinian has said about him on this point, in his letter to Mennas, has a profession and show of argument, but he makes no statement at all of the arguments of Origen, and no reply to them.

Substantially the same is true of Augustine in his "Enchiridion" and his "City of God." He does not state the argument of Origen, or expound the texts on which he relies, or take an enlarged view of the subject. He speaks in a judicial style, and gives his opinions, but these bear no marks of profound investigation.

It is of very great moment to understand this train of thought and feeling during the early centuries, for any effort to transfer into them the interests, the convictions, or the emotions of any of the existing parties of Christendom will, of necessity, result in an utter falsification of history.

In order truly to understand history, we must go back through the ages, dropping as we go, in succession, the controversies that grew up in later ages, until we can see clearly what Christians were, in fact, thinking about in the early ages, and what was the leading interest in every subsequent age.

The way is now prepared to consider the first effort to set forth the principles of a comprehensive theology by Origen, in which universal restoration occupied an important or rather a fundamental position.

## CHAPTER XXI.

### *ORIGEN AND HIS AGE.*

WE have taken the age of Origen (A. D. 185–253) as a point of vision from which to survey the course of opinion as to the doctrine of retribution. It was the age of the first development of scientific theology, and of the extensive establishment of theological schools. In this age began the extended movement in behalf of the doctrine of universal restoration, which continued until the sixth century in two forms, that of the Alexandrian and that of the Antiochian school. Origen is on the dividing line between this movement and that of the school of Asia Minor, which can be traced back to the apostle John, and in which Melito of Sardis, and Irenæus, the disciple of Polycarp, were the most celebrated teachers. Irenæus taught the annihilation of the wicked, agreeing in this with Justin Martyr. But this movement was interrupted by Origen and his successors, and for centuries the doctrine of universal restoration took its place, so far as the doctrine of eternal punishment was not held. The only exception to this statement is found in Arnobius, who wrote a little after Origen, and taught the doctrine of annihilation. We propose to give an account of the leading theological schools that were developed in this age, and of the influence exerted by them on the great question of future retribution.

But, before doing this, it is indispensable to take a more particular view of Origen himself, for he stands in relations

to the whole Church such as are sustained by no other one of the early Christian teachers.

#### GREAT FACTS.

Two great facts stand out on the page of ecclesiastical history: One, that the first system of Christian theology was composed and issued by Origen in the year 230 after Christ, of which a fundamental and essential element was the doctrine of the universal restoration of all fallen beings to their original holiness, and union with God.

The second is, that, after the lapse of a little more than three centuries, in the year 544, this doctrine was for the first time condemned and anathematized as heretical. This was done, not in a general council, but in a local council called by the Patriarch Mennas at Constantinople, by the order of Justinian.

During all this long interval, the opinions of Origen and his various writings were an element of power in the whole Christian world. For a long time he stood high as the greatest luminary of the Christian world. He gave an impulse to the leading spirits of subsequent ages, and was honored by them as their greatest benefactor. At last, after all his pupils were dead, in the remote age of Justinian he was anathematized as a heretic of the worst kind. The same also was done with respect to Theodore of Mopsuestia, of the Antiochian school, who held the doctrine of universal restitution on a different basis. This, too, was done long after he was dead, in the year 553. From and after this point the doctrine of future eternal punishment reigned with undisputed sway during the middle ages that preceded the Reformation.

#### ORIGEN AND HIS AGE.

To prepare the way for our history, we propose to set

forth the character of Origen and his age, and also of the age in which he was condemned.

The time of Origen was a great turning-point of opinion on a practical question that lay at the foundation of all theological and social development. Before him, the conversion of the Roman Empire to Christianity was not expected. It was generally believed that it was to be destroyed by the coming of Christ, and that his millennial reign was to follow. Origen first developed the idea of the conversion of the empire to Christianity, exposed the chiliastic illusions, and, with wide-reaching views, undertook to prepare Christianity for its future destinies.

The great facts of Christianity had been proclaimed and recorded in the gospels, and the canon of the New Testament had been substantially completed.

The assaults of the Gnostics on the Old Testament were, to a great extent, on rational and moral grounds. For example, the conduct of God, in hardening Pharaoh's heart, and then punishing him for hardness of heart, was assailed by them as unjust, and unworthy of the true God of the universe. Many of the assaults of Celsus were of a like kind, and had not been fully answered. In particular, he had assailed, as unworthy of God, the doctrine of eternal punishment in unquenchable fire.

#### ORIGEN AT ALEXANDRIA.

At Alexandria also, his native place, and the seat of the great Catechetical School, in which he was a teacher, there was a great concourse of pagan philosophers, Gnostics, and other heretics, to be encountered and refuted, or to be converted. Origen was in fact instrumental in the conversion of many, especially of Ambrose, a wealthy nobleman of



Alexandria, once a Gnostic, but ever after his zealous patron and supporter.

#### FOUNDER OF SCIENTIFIC THEOLOGY.

It ought not to surprise us that, under such a pressure on all sides, Origen felt the need of rising above the mere detail of facts, and of developing some fundamental principles out of which might spring some system of the universe which could be defended on rational and moral grounds. This was his object in his work on the fundamental principles of Christianity (*Peri Archon*), which was the first system of Christian theology ever issued.

The two great foundations of this system were preëxistence and universal restoration. Without preëxistence he could not explain and defend the state of things in this world in accordance with the benevolence and the justice of God. Without universal restitution he could not bring the system to a final issue worthy of God.

He based his whole system on a real and not nominal free agency, which could never be lost. On this basis he defended God's dealings with Pharaoh with a keenness and sagacity that have not been exceeded since his day.

He considered, also, the attributes and relations of the three persons of the Trinity, and their action in the general system.

It deserves notice how deeply imbedded in his scheme is the doctrine of universal restoration. Without it the whole system falls to pieces.

Other topics, as to eternal creation, and future systems, were included, and also as to the resurrection. Kurtz, in view of his labors in this department, says that, notwithstanding his errors are rejected, he is justly honored as "the founder of scientific theology."

But this was but a small part of the work undertaken and executed by him.

## OTHER LABORS OF ORIGEN.

The whole science of textual criticism, of commentary, and exposition, and homiletical application, was as yet undeveloped. Origen entered this wide field, and labored with an energy and learning that stimulated, excited, and instructed, the whole Christian world.

Of him Dr. Schaff says: "Origen was the greatest scholar of his age, and the most learned and genial of all the ante-Nicene fathers. Even heathens and heretics admired or feared his brilliant talents. His knowledge embraced all departments of the philology, philosophy, and theology, of his day. With this he united profound and fertile thought, keen penetration, and glowing imagination. As a true divine, he consecrated all his studies by prayer, and turned them according to his best convictions to the service of truth and piety."

Those who recall the impulse communicated to Biblical studies in this country by Prof. Stuart, can form some conception of the still greater work effected by Origen in his *Hexapla*, his commentaries, homilies and notes, and reply to Celsus.

Of him Dr. Schaff says again: "He may be called, in many respects, the Schleiermacher of the Greek Church. He was a guide from the heathen philosophy, and the heretical gnosis, to the Christian faith. He exerted an immeasurable influence in stimulating the development of the Catholic theology, and forming the great Nicene fathers, Athanasius, Basil, the two Gregories, Hilary and Ambrose, who, consequently, in spite of all his deviations, set great value on his services."

## MORAL CHARACTER OF HIS AGE.

Notice now the moral peculiarities of this and the preceding ages. Lecky, after a careful survey of the history of morals in the Roman Empire, says: "There can be little doubt that for nearly two hundred years after its establishment in Europe, the Christian community exhibited a moral purity which, if it has been equaled, has never for any long period been surpassed. Completely separated from the Roman world that was around them, abstaining alike from political life, from appeals to the tribunals, and from military occupations; looking forward to the immediate advent of their Master, and the destruction of the empire in which they dwelt, and animated by all the fervor of a young religion, the Christians found within themselves a whole order of ideas and feelings, sufficiently powerful to guard them from the contamination of their age."

At this time, too, there was no intervention of imperial despotism in religious questions, no œcumenical councils called by imperial authority, and the only valid appeal was to Scripture and to reason. It was during the close of this age, and before the imperial age was developed, that Origen lived and wrote.

## PIETY OF ORIGEN.

And it is conceded by all that he was as eminent for piety and for a truly Christian spirit as any saint of any age.

Of him the dispassionate and judicial Mosheim says, while faithfully exposing what he deems his errors: "Origen possessed every excellence that can adorn the Christian character; uncommon piety from his very childhood; astonishing devotedness to that most holy religion which he professed; unequaled perseverance in labors and

toils for the advancement of the Christian cause; untiring zeal for the Church and for the extension of Christianity; an elevation of soul which placed him above all ordinary desires or fears; a most permanent contempt of wealth, honor, pleasures, and of death itself; the purest trust in the Lord Jesus; for whose sake, when he was old and oppressed with ills of every kind, he patiently and perseveringly endured the severest sufferings. It is not strange, therefore, that he was held in so high estimation, both while he lived and after death. Certainly if any man deserves to stand first in the catalogue of saints and martyrs, and to be annually held up as an example to Christians, this is the man, for, except the apostles of Jesus Christ and their companions, I know of no one, among all those enrolled and honored as saints, who excelled him in virtue and holiness" ("Historical Commentary on Christianity before Constantine," vol. ii., p. 149).

## DEFENDER OF FREE INQUIRY.

One thing deserves special notice. The influence of Origen was always exerted by, and in favor of, free investigation and argument; and in a number of cases he effected what has rarely been done—he convinced errorists by kind personal argument so thoroughly that they renounced their errors and returned to the truth.

## REJECTS MATERIAL FIRE.

Before we come to the age of Justinian, in which Origen and his doctrine of restoration were finally condemned, one thing more should be made exceedingly prominent. It is that Origen utterly rejected the idea of punishment by literal fire. He taught that there would be punishment, intense, fearful, and long-continued, but that

it would be by intellectual and moral forces, adapted as a final result to reform the sinner. He thus never passed out of the region of intellectual philosophy and moral influence into the region of brute force.

#### AGE OF JUSTINIAN.

Let us now pass from the age of Origen to that of Justinian. It may be thus briefly characterized: It was an age in which all free inquiry was utterly proscribed, in which all questions were settled by authority, and in which unreasoning credulity, falsely called faith, was regarded as the crowning Christian grace. It was an age in which the keys of heaven and hell were in the hands of the hierarchy through the exclusive power to administer the sacraments, and to admit or exclude from the Church. It was an age in which the fires of hell were held to be material, and thus not dependent for their punitive power on moral character, but meet instruments of despotic force. In the hands of the clergy the doctrine of eternal punishment had thus become an instrument of degrading terrorism, to extort money or to enforce the belief of doctrines at war with the most sacred moral convictions implanted by God in the human mind. It was an age, too, in which the moral degeneracy of the Church had reached an extreme point of degradation.

Moreover, the manner in which Origen and Theodore were condemned and stigmatized as heretics was in keeping with the character of the age, as a simple narrative of the course of events in the councils would clearly prove.

Had we time we could easily confirm all these statements by abundant testimony. But two witnesses must suffice. We shall refer to Dr. Schaff and to Mr. Lecky.

DR. SCHAFF.

Dr. Schaff tells us that, even before the days of Justinian, all free inquiry had been destroyed by the results of the assaults on Origen of Epiphanius, and others. Of these he says : " They show the progress of orthodoxy under the twofold aspect of earnest zeal for the pure faith, and a narrow-minded intolerance toward all free speculation. The condemnation of Origen was a death-blow to theological science in the Greek Church, and left it to stiffen gradually into a mechanical traditionalism and formalism " (vol. ii., p. 698).

MR. LECKY.

In the days of Justinian, old Rome had fallen before the barbarians, and the centre of the Roman Empire was in Byzantium. Lecky, after a careful survey of the pagan empire, says of this Christian Byzantine Empire : " The universal verdict of history is, that it constitutes, without a single exception, the most thoroughly base and despicable form that civilization has yet assumed. Though very cruel and very sensual, there have been times when cruelty assumed more ruthless, and sensuality more extravagant aspects ; but there has been no other enduring civilization so absolutely destitute of all the forms and elements of greatness, and none to which the epithet *mean* may be so emphatically applied. The Byzantine Empire was eminently the age of treachery. Its vices were the vices of men who had ceased to be brave without learning to be virtuous. Without patriotism, without the fruition or desire of liberty, after the first paroxysms of religious agitation, without genius or intellectual activity ; slaves, and willing slaves, both in their actions and their thoughts, immersed in sensuality and in the most frivolous pleasures,

the people only emerged from their listlessness when some theological subtilty, or some rivalry in the chariot-races, stimulated them into frantic riots." It will be remembered that, at this time, in this Christian empire, the Church and the state were essentially one. Of this period, and of the Catholic period of the middle ages, he says: "Credulity being taught as a virtue, and all conclusions dictated by authority, a deadly torpor sank upon the human mind, which for many centuries almost suspended its action, and which was only broken by the scrutinizing, innovating, and freethinking habits that accompanied the rise of the industrial republics in Italy" (vol. ii., p. 16).

#### THE INTERVAL.

Between the age of Origen and this degraded age in which he was condemned and stigmatized, and in which future eternal punishment was developed in its worst and most despotic and debasing form, there is a wide interval of time, as well as a wide range of moral influence.

During this period there was the action of theological schools, as well as of prominent leaders in the Church, with reference to this doctrine of universal restoration.

We are now prepared to take a general view of these theological schools and of their action on this great question.

## CHAPTER XXII.

### *EARLY THEOLOGICAL SEMINARIES AND RETRIBUTION.*

WE have spoken in general terms of Origen and of his system of theology, based on preëxistence and universal restoration. We have spoken of his age, and of his relations to it, and to the coming ages. We have spoken of his eminent piety, of his distinguished scholarship, of the great work accomplished by him in the field of sound literature, and of his educating power on the great minds of the generations that followed him. We have also, in general terms, given the debased character of the age in which his doctrine of universal restoration was denounced as heretical and subjected to an anathema by the local Council of Constantinople in the year 544. We now come back to his age to unfold it more fully in its relations to theological schools, which from his time were most fully developed. At the time when he published his system of theology he was the leading teacher in the great Theological School of Alexandria.

#### DR. SHEDD'S VIEW.

But we are told by Dr. Shedd, in a passage which we have quoted in a preceding chapter, that the doctrine of future universal restoration was entirely confined to that school. He does not say how many other schools there were, nor what course these dissenting or opposed schools took, when, in a school so prominent and influential as that



of Alexandria, a doctrine was promulgated which they regarded as erroneous and dangerous. It is, therefore, the more important for us, if we would get a true view of the facts of history, in all their relations, to consider these points. The idea conveyed by him is that of a general and united public sentiment in the Church, from which one theological school dissented as a kind of wandering star, while all the other luminaries revolved harmoniously around the great centre of truth.

#### CONSEQUENCES OF THE VIEW.

If this is a true view of the facts of the case, then it is morally necessary that certain other facts should be found in the records of history. It cannot be supposed that any teacher in a theological school would be allowed to continue from year to year to train up teachers hostile to the prevailing views of the main body of the churches, without some effort to arrest the course of the evil, either by his removal, or by founding opposing schools, or by elaborate argumentative refutations of the errors promulgated, or by all these measures at once.

#### APPEAL TO FACTS.

What was done when Dr. Ware, a Unitarian, was appointed professor in Harvard College, and it was felt that the institution had come under the control of Unitarians, and would be used as a means of promulgating their views? Why was Andover founded, except because it was felt that the college, originally designed to train up godly, orthodox, religious teachers, was to be used in opposition to the doctrines of the churches by which it was founded? Why was Amherst College founded, except to make good the loss? Why did the Unitarian controversy break out, and lead to

earnest argument and profound research? Was it not to vindicate and defend the endangered truth? Suppose now, after Andover had been founded, that Dr. Griffin, or Prof. Stuart, had published an elaborate system of theology, resulting in the doctrine of universal restoration, would an orthodox board have allowed them to continue to teach in peace? Would they not have been speedily removed? Or, if not, if they could carry the trustees and overseers with them, would not the seminary have become at once the object of ceaseless attacks from Princeton, and other schools devoted to the defense of the true faith?

If, then, the state of opinion existed of old in the Church at large which is alleged by Prof. Shedd, ought we not to find in history facts analogous to those which have been briefly sketched from the history of the Church in New England? And, if we do not find them, is it not proof conclusive that the state of things alleged did not exist?

## REAL STATE OF FACTS.

What, then, was the state of facts as to the leading theological schools of the Christian world, in the age of Origen, and some centuries after? It was, in brief, this: There were at least six theological schools in the Church at large. Of these six schools, one, and only one, was decidedly and earnestly in favor of the doctrine of future eternal punishment. One was in favor of the annihilation of the wicked. Two were in favor of the doctrine of universal restoration on the principles of Origen, and two in favor of universal restoration on the principles of Theodore of Mopsuestia. It is also true that the prominent defenders of the doctrine of universal restoration were decided believers in the divinity of Christ, in the Trinity, in the incarnation and atonement, and in the great Christian doctrine of regenera-

tion; and were, in piety, devotion, Christian activity, and missionary enterprise, as well as in learning and intellectual power and attainments, inferior to none in the best ages of the Church, and were greatly superior to those by whom, in after-ages, they were condemned and anathematized.

It is also true that the arguments by which they defended their views were never fairly stated and answered. Indeed, they were never stated at all. They may admit of a thorough answer and refutation, but, even if so, they were not condemned and anathematized on any such grounds, but simply in obedience to the arbitrary mandates of Justinian, whose final arguments were deposition and banishment for those who refused to do his will.

#### CONSEQUENCES.

If all these things are so, it does not of course follow that the doctrine of universal restoration is true. That is a question to be decided on Scriptural grounds. But it does follow that the assumption that this question was settled by THE CHURCH, so called, in a manner deserving either confidence or respect, is utterly fallacious and delusive.

#### DEMAND OF PROOF.

Of course the statements that have been made by us demand proof. They differ greatly from the statements of Prof. Shedd, and, though they can be sustained by the combined testimony of all the most authoritative Church historians, yet they present the case in a stronger light than will be found in any one of them. But a careful examination of the original sources of evidence will abundantly sustain every historical proposition that we have laid down.

It will be in order, then, to mention the six leading theological schools of which we have spoken.

## GEOGRAPHICAL POSITION.

Geographically, they are situated around the Mediterranean Sea, except one, which is on the upper courses of the Euphrates. Beginning, then, at the great school of Alexandria, whose position on this question is conceded, and passing up on the east end of the Mediterranean Sea, we come to Cesarea, which for some years was the seat of a distinguished theological school, under the care of Origen and his friend Pamphilus.

For a time, Dr. Schaff tell us, it "outshone that at Alexandria, and labored for the spread of the kingdom of God." From this school came the celebrated Gregory Thaumaturgus, ever the grateful scholar and admirer, and finally the eulogist of Origen. Passing on to the north we come to Antioch, in West Syria, where was the celebrated Antiochian school to which belonged such representatives as Diodore of Tarsus, and Theodore of Mopsuestia, those well-known advocates of universal restoration, not as followers of Origen, but on principles of their own. Passing on farther to the east, we come to Edessa, in Eastern Syria; and, farther on, to Nisibis. The Eastern Syrian great theological school was sometimes in one of these places, and sometimes in the other, according as they were tolerated or persecuted by the orthodox Greek Church and the emperor. But here was the great centre of the persecuted Nestorians, when excommunicated and anathematized by the orthodox Greek Church and the imperial decree.

## THEODORE OF MOPSUESTIA.

As Nestorians, they could not but revere the great Theodore of Mopsuestia, who was, in fact, the father of Nestorianism. Accordingly, his works were translated into Syriac, and he was revered in the Nestorian churches, as

"THE INTERPRETER" of the Word of God. It must be conceded that he was especially honored as the father and defender of Nestorianism. But it is impossible that his views of restoration should have been unknown, for they are an essential element of his system, and are prominently declared in his works and in his creed. In addition to this they are, as has been said, introduced into the liturgy which he drew up for the Nestorian Church. Yet his views on this point were not enforced as a creed, and the eminent James of Nisibis, and Ephraim the Syrian, in their *popular* discourses, teach future eternal punishment. Whether this was their interior belief we cannot say, but the fact that Theodore was so honored, as "the interpreter," and that his works were translated, studied in the seminary, by the students, and circulated without protest, authorizes the statement that the influence of this school was in favor of universal restoration.

#### ANALOGOUS CASE.

To see the force of these facts, suppose that the theological works of the most eminent modern advocate of universal restoration were to be introduced into the Union Theological Seminary at New York, or into the Princeton Theological Seminary, as a text-book, and that he was highly honored as "the interpreter" of the Word of God, and that no protest was uttered against the doctrine of universal restoration, would it be unfair to say that the influence of those seminaries was in favor of that doctrine? Add to this that he was permitted to introduce it into certain acts of public worship in that denomination, and would not the evidence be complete?

#### TESTIMONY TO THEODORE.

Consider, now, who Theodore of Mopsuestia was, not

as viewed by a slavish packed council, met to execute the will of a Byzantine despot, but as judged by one of the most eminent evangelical scholars of Germany, Dorner. Of him he says: "Theodore of Mopsuestia was the crown and climax of the school of Antioch. The compass of his learning, his acuteness, and, as we must suppose, also, the force of his personal character, conjoined with his labors through many years, as a teacher both of churches and of young and talented disciples, and as a prolific writer, gained for him the title of *Magister Orientis* ("Master of the East"). He labored on uninterruptedly till his death in the year 427, and was regarded with an appreciation the more widely extended as he was the first Oriental theologian of his time," ("Doctrine of the Person of Christ," Div. ii., vol. i., p. 50, Edinburgh).

## STATEMENT OF NEANDER.

Add to this the statement of Neander as to other schools springing from the school of Edessa and Nisibis: "From this school arose others among this church party (the Nestorian); and through many centuries it contributed to diffuse great enthusiasm for Christian knowledge and theological culture, and particularly for Biblical studies, to which the spirit of Theodore of Mopsuestia had given the incentives; and the Nestorian churches became an important instrument of diffusing Christianity in Eastern Asia" ("Church History," vol. ii., p. 552).

We cannot at this point speak of the wonderful missionary spirit of the Nestorian churches whom Theodore thus inspired, nor of their connection, through the Saracens, with the revival of Europe from the paralysis and darkness into which they had been plunged by the corrupt and persecuting despotism which anathematized Theodore. Illum-

boldt, Dr. Draper, and Lecky have noticed it as one of the sublime and wonderful dispensations of Providence, and at another time we may speak of it more fully. But now we must resume our circuit of theological schools.

#### SCHOOL OF JOHN.

Returning, then, to Antioch, and passing to the north of the Mediterranean, we come to Asia Minor, the field of the seven churches of the Apocalypse, and of the apostle John. As the evangelist Mark is said to have founded the school of Alexandria, so the apostle John is regarded as the founder in Ephesus of the school of Asia Minor, from which came Polycarp, Melito, and Irenæus, the great defender of the Church against the Gnostic heresies, and Hippolytus his hearer and follower.

#### DR. SCHAFF ON IRENÆUS.

Of this father Dr. Schaff says: "Irenæus was the leading representative of the Asiatic Johannean school in the second half of the second century, the champion of Catholic orthodoxy against Gnostic heresy, and the mediator between the Eastern and Western Churches. He united a learned Greek education and philosophical penetration with practical wisdom and moderation, and a sound sense of the simple and essential in Christianity. We may plainly trace in him the influence of the spirit of John" ("Church History," vol. i., p. 488).

#### DR. KURTZ.

Of this school Dr. Kurtz says that it was "distinguished by its firm adherence to the Bible, its strong faith, its scientific liberality, its conciliatory tone, and its trenchant polemics against heretics" ("Text-book of Church History," p. 137, Philadelphia). It is, therefore, the more

remarkable that the doctrine of future eternal punishment was not taught by any of this school so far as we know, nor the doctrine of universal restoration; but, on the other hand, the doctrine of the final annihilation of the wicked was clearly taught by so eminent a man as Irenæus. Thus, in five out of six of the early theological schools we do not find the doctrine of future eternal punishment. Nor do we find any assault on the schools of Alexandria, Cesarea, Antioch, Edessa, and Asia Minor, from any quarter, for their unfaithfulness to that doctrine, nor any general combination against them, nor any effort to found seminaries against them, nor any general excitement and controversy in behalf of the doctrine of future eternal punishment. What shall we say, then? Was it held in no school? Yes, in one—the school of Northern Africa. Making the complete circuit of the Mediterranean Sea, we come at last to the field in which labored Tertullian, Cyprian, Minucius Felix, and, greatest and last of all, Augustine. In this school the doctrine of future eternal punishment had faithful defenders, and universal restoration and final annihilation found no place. From it came an influence that, maturing during the course of centuries, united at last with other attacks on both Origen and Theodore of Mopsuestia, and led to their condemnation for their heresy as to future eternal punishment.

## GENERAL VIEW.

This, however, is but a general view of the position of these schools on the question of future retribution. But it illustrates and confirms our previous statement as to the freedom of opinion that long prevailed on the subject, for the believers in eternal punishment encountered no odium from any quarter.



## PARTICULAR VIEW.

But a more particular view of these schools and their eminent teachers and scholars is necessary to a clear understanding of the state of things at large in the churches, and the course of events. We shall first look a little more closely at the school of Asia Minor founded by the apostle John, and of which Polycarp and Irenæus are representatives. It is of great moment to verify the statements which we have often made concerning Irenæus, of his belief of the annihilation of the wicked, and also to inquire to what extent these views were adopted by others. After this it will be in order to consider the different grounds on which the doctrine of universal restitution was held and defended in the different schools.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

### *IRENÆUS AND THE SCHOOL OF JOHN.*

WE have, in our history of previous ages, spoken of an earnest desire to produce an harmonious universe, as the ultimate result of all things—a universe free from every form of sin and suffering. We have also remarked that this final result may be conceived of as secured in two ways: One is the annihilation of all unholy beings after enduring a punishment of such duration and severity as are demanded by infinite benevolence and justice, from a regard to the welfare of the universe. The other is a final restoration of all to holiness, through the influence of remedial punishment. It also appeared that, of the six early theological schools, the influence of four was in favor of the doctrine of universal restoration, of one in favor of the doctrine of eternal punishment and suffering. It appeared, also, that, although the majority of the schools were in favor of universal restoration, yet the doctrine of annihilation was earliest developed, and that very great claims are made for it in the earliest ages of the Church by the modern advocates of that doctrine. Of these claims we have admitted that some are well founded, while we reject others.

#### IRENÆUS.

The strongest and most influential authority for this doctrine is clearly Irenæus, of the school of John. But from

his prominence as a saint, and the great defender of Christianity against the Gnostics, as well as from his relations to Polycarp, and through him to the apostle John, there has been a very great reluctance in the ranks of the orthodox, in modern times, to concede that he was a defender of the doctrine of the annihilation of the wicked. It is important, therefore, to state his case very clearly.

#### COURSE PURSUED.

When it has been alleged that Irenæus defended this doctrine, the common mode of refuting the allegation has been to quote from him in various forms his statement of the sentence of the Saviour at the last judgment, by which the wicked are consigned to *aionian* punishment, and to regard it as proof conclusive of his belief in eternal suffering, and, on the strength of these passages, to explain away the passages in which he seems to teach annihilation. This is the course pursued by Massuetus, in his standard edition of Irenæus. At the same time he overlooks other parts of the system of Irenæus which ought to exert a decisive influence on the question, and which render it certain that he did not understand *aionian* punishment to mean eternal punishment, but rather the punishment of the world to come, as affirmed by Prof. Tayler Lewis.

#### SYSTEM OF IRENÆUS.

In order, then, to present his system in all its parts, it is necessary to consider, first, his views as to the final reorganization of all things. Then the way will be prepared to present his views of the annihilation of the wicked, and to confirm them by his account of the proceedings of the last judgment, in conferring immortality on the righteous, and not on the wicked.

## REORGANIZATION OF THE UNIVERSE.

His views on the final reorganization of all things are given in the fourth of the passages of his writings discovered by Pfaff at Turin, in 1715, and first published by him. Dr. Schaff refers to it in vol. i., p. 490, of his history, and states that it relates to "the object of the incarnation, which is stated to be the purging away of sin, and the final annihilation of all evil." He also says that "the genuineness of these passages has been called in question by some Roman divines, but without sufficient reason."

This statement of Irenæus would not decide of itself whether all evil was to be annihilated by the restoration of all sinners to holiness, or by their annihilation. We therefore give an exact translation of the passage itself, from the edition of A. Stieren, Leipsic, 1853, vol. i., p. 888 :

"Christ, having been proclaimed the Son of God before the ages, appeared in the fullness of time, that by his blood he might purify us who were under sin, and present us holy to the Father, if we surrender ourselves obediently to the teaching of the Spirit, and at the end of the times he is about to come, to do away with all evil, and to restore all things to harmony, so that there shall be an end of all pollutions."

It will be seen that this passage is perfectly decisive against his belief of the eternal existence of sinful and polluted beings in the universe of God ; for, according to him, Christ is to produce universal harmony, and to bring all sin and pollution to a perpetual end. But still this passage, by itself, is not decisive of the mode in which these results are to be attained, though, if there were nothing more, it would slightly countenance the idea of universal restoration by the annihilation of sin ; for it does not expressly speak of the annihilation of sinners, but of sin and pollution.

## DECISIVE PASSAGES.

But we are not left to doubt or conjecture as to the real views of Irenæus. Nothing can be more explicit and unequivocal than his utterances in other places, especially in one in which he speaks expressly as to the annihilation of the wicked. The passage occurs in his work, "Contra Hæreses," ii., 34, 2, 3, 4. He begins by denying the necessary annihilation of the spirit after death; by referring to the case of the rich man and Lazarus. This, he says, teaches that at death souls do not cease to exist, or pass into other bodies, but so live as to be recognized. To those who assert that souls, not being self-existent, but coming into being, must die with the body, he replies that, though God only is by nature immortal, yet by the will of God they can continue to exist as long as he pleases. The material system is not self-existent, but was called into being by the will of God, and yet it exists for ages by his will; so also can it be with the souls and spirits of men. From this he passes to consider the question, What, in fact, is the will of God as to the future existence of men?

## ANNIHILATION.

On this point we will give an exact translation of his words. Referring to Psalm xxi. 4, he says: "Thus it is said concerning the salvation of man, 'He asked life of thee, and thou gavest it him, even length of days forever and ever,' indicating that the Father of all gives *to those who are saved* length of days forever and ever. For our life comes not from ourselves nor from our nature. We have life, but it is given to us by the grace of God. And therefore he who cherishes the gift of life, and is thankful to him who bestowed it, shall also receive length of days forever and ever. But he who casts it away, and is un-

grateful to his Creator for his creation, and does not acknowledge him who conferred the gift, deprives himself of *eternal existence*." In this passage Irenæus is plainly speaking of the continuance of natural life forever, as denoted by *eternal existence*, and not of spiritual life in holiness.

This view of the case he sustains by referring to a principle stated in another portion of Scripture :

"Therefore, the Lord says to those who were ungrateful to him, 'If ye have not been faithful in that which is little, who will give you that which is much?' signifying that those who have been ungrateful to the giver for *temporal life*, which is little, shall justly be deprived by him of eternal existence."

## PHILOSOPHIC IMMORTALITY.

This view of the case he proceeds to sustain by refuting the Platonic doctrine of the necessary immortality of the soul. This, also, we shall quote; for, though what we have quoted is explicit beyond all evasion, yet efforts are made to render the position of Irenæus on this question doubtful, and therefore we will give line upon line till doubt is impossible. He thus proceeds to refute the doctrine of the natural immortality of the soul :

"As the animal body is not the spirit, but partakes of the spirit so long as God wills, so the spirit is not life, but partakes of the life given by God. Hence, as the inspired Word says concerning the first man, he became a living soul, teaching us that he became a living soul by participating of life, so also the spirit is to be conceived of as something separate from the life of which it partakes. So long, then, as God gives life and continued existence, it follows that minds, though called into being from non-existence, will hereafter *EXIST so long as God wills them to have exist-*

*ence and being.* The will of God must be supreme in all things, and everything must give way to it and obey it. This completes what I have to say as to the CREATION AND CONTINUED EXISTENCE of the mind."

#### ATTEMPT OF MASSUETUS.

We can now judge of the attempt of Massuetus to neutralize the positive testimony of passages so explicit. He says that Irenæus, in these passages, is speaking of spiritual life or the life of holiness, and not of the eternal existence of the soul. Truly, this is a desperate evasion. It lies upon the very face of the passage, that he is speaking of eternal existence as the reward of holiness and gratitude, and the loss of eternal existence as the punishment for ingratitude and disobedience. He begins by showing that the soul does not cease to exist at death, since *life* is the gift of God, and can be continued as long as he pleases. And to exclude the evasion that by *life* he means holiness, he calls it *temporal life*, and contrasts it with *eternal existence*, and not with holiness. In conclusion, he says that, in the whole discussion, he has spoken of the *creation and continued existence* of the mind, thus denying that he has been speaking of spiritual life. Yet the loss of existence which he teaches does not take place at once. He distinctly sets forth great and fearful punishments to be endured by the wicked in the future state, before they cease to exist.

#### THE JUDGMENT.

This general view is illustrated and confirmed by the closing part of his creed, in which he states that at the final judgment God will bestow upon the righteous the gift of immortality. His words are these: "Wicked spirits and angels that have transgressed and become apos-

tate, and the impious and unjust, and lawless and blasphemous among men, Christ will send into the *aionian* fire. But upon the just he will mercifully bestow life, and confer on them *the gift of immortality* and heavenly glory." This plainly implies that all on whom this gift is not bestowed—that is, all the wicked—will finally cease to exist.

These passages remove all doubt as to the manner in which, in the opinion of Irenæus, all evil and pollution were to be removed from the universe, and all things restored to the harmony of love. It is plain, also, that he understood the sentence of Christ at the last judgment in accordance with these views.

## RELATIONS TO JOHN.

The question now naturally arises: If so prominent a man as Irenæus, in such relations to Polycarp, the disciple of John, held these views, are we authorized to trace them up to the apostle himself? If we could find them in Polycarp, and also a declaration that he received them from John, the case would be a very strong one. But this we cannot do.

## EPISTLE OF POLYCARP.

There is, it is true, an authenticated epistle of Polycarp in existence. But in that we can find nothing decisive as to any view of retribution. In the second chapter of his Epistle to the Philippians v. 11 (Wake), he says: "If we please the Lord in this present world, we shall also be made partakers of that which is to come, according as he has promised us that he will raise us from the dead; and that if we walk worthy of him we shall also reign together with him if we believe." Again, in chapter ii. 8,



he says, "He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also raise us up in like manner, if we do his will and walk according to his commandments."

In these passages, especially the last, a holy life seems to be made the condition of a resurrection from the dead. And in no part of the epistle is the resurrection of the wicked spoken of. Again, in i. 7, it is said that "to Christ all things are made subject that are in heaven, and that are in earth, whom every living creature shall worship." All this, at first, might seem to imply either that all the wicked were to be converted or annihilated, and that so none of them would be raised. But the conclusion would be premature, for he proceeds to say, "He shall come to be the judge of the quick and the dead, and his blood God shall require of them that believe not in him." So, then, there will be wicked ones to be judged, although nothing is said of their resurrection. The fact is, that the epistle is almost entirely confined to the Church, and all allusions to the wicked are incidental. The only doctrine taught is that the righteous shall be raised and rewarded, and the wicked judged. But nothing is said of the nature or the duration of the punishment of the wicked. The connecting link therefore fails, and the authority of John cannot be invoked to sustain the teachings of Irenæus. They must stand or fall according to their agreement with the Word of God.

#### EMINENCE OF IRENÆUS.

Irenæus was not the only one who held these views, but we have not time at present to consider the case of others with any sufficient care and accuracy. The case of Irenæus assures us that a man may be, as Irenæus was, to use the words of Dr. Schaff, "the leading representative of the Asiatic Johannean school, in the second half of the second

century, the champion of Catholic orthodoxy against Gnostic heresy, the mediator between the Eastern and Western Churches, the enemy of all error and schism, and, on the whole, the most orthodox of the ante-Nicene fathers," and yet hold the doctrine of the final annihilation of the wicked and the reorganization of the universe, and the end of all evil thereby. That such a man, standing in such relations, should hold this doctrine, does not prove it to be true ; but it does teach us that there was something that strongly recommended the doctrine to him, and this was, that it was one way, and to him the most reasonable and Scriptural, of reaching a united universe, in which there should be neither sin nor misery. After his day, this result was predominantly sought in another way. But as to the result there has been a craving for it by many of the noblest minds in every age.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

### *JUSTIN AND ARNOBIUS ON ANNIHILATION.*

IN our exhibition of the views of Irenæus, we have finished what we have to say of the views of the school of Asia Minor. We have seen that the annihilation of the wicked after severe punishment was clearly taught by that eminent father. But we remarked that there were others by whom the same views substantially were held. We referred especially to Justin, the Martyr, and Arnobius. Of Justin we shall now speak, as the first in time and in importance. And that he may not be a mere abstraction to us, but a living personage with whom sympathy is possible, we will say a few words concerning his history and labors.

#### JUSTIN MARTYR.

In the first place, he was not one of the regular clergy. He was not the bishop of any church. He wielded no ecclesiastical authority. He was not properly even a preacher upon whom the hands of the presbytery had been laid. What then, it may be asked, was he? He was a traveling Christian philosopher, engaged in the work of evangelization, and the world at large was his diocese. He was born in Palestine, in Flavia Neapolis, formerly Shechem, and lived between A. D. 100-166. He had a classical education, and was an ardent student of the Greek philosophers. In the opening part of his dialogue with Trypho, the Jew,

he tells us how he sought for the truth first under the guidance of a Stoic philosopher, then of an Aristotelian, then of a Pythagorean, but all in vain. At last, seeking a solitary walk for reflection, on the sea-shore, he was met by an old man, a Christian, by whom he was guided to the true philosophy in Christ. To parts of his dialogue with the old man we shall have occasion to refer, as throwing light on his views of future retribution.

## JUSTIN AS APOLOGIST.

From the time of this great change, he devoted himself to the promulgation and defense of Christianity. He stands as the leader of a class of writers known as Apologists, not that he was actually the first, but the first whose works have come down to us. He wrote two defenses of Christianity, called his first and second Apologies, addressed, as is generally believed, the first to that illustrious Roman emperor, Antoninus Pius, the second to the no less eminent Marcus Aurelius. These are of intense interest, by reason of the light which they throw on the state of Christianity and the churches in the first part of the second century. He seeks to lay open to the Roman emperors the whole truth as to the slandered and persecuted Christians. He describes their belief, their mode of life, their meetings, and worship, and invokes for them protection and justice at the hand of the mighty Emperors of Rome. He also defended Christianity against the assaults of the Jews, in his dialogue with Trypho, the Jew.

## JUSTIN AS EVANGELIST.

In his work of evangelization he traveled from place to place, talking with all to whom he could have access, and still wearing the philosopher's cloak, as he did when he was converted, for he thought that thus he should gain more

ready access to men of all classes. He was a very learned man and a great reader. He led the way in using the Platonic philosophy in the exposition and defense of Christianity, finding in it much truth, though he rejected, or intended to reject, all its errors. In this respect he was in sympathy with the Alexandrian school. He died as a martyr at Rome under Marcus Aurelius. His writings are very noteworthy in one respect.

#### RECOGNITION OF CHRIST'S SENTENCE.

We find in them the first full recognition of the words of Christ as judge at the last great day, and he sets forth the Christian doctrine of future retribution in language derived directly from the words of Christ. Especially he uses constantly the word *aionios* to denote its nature. To quote all the passages in which he does this would transcend our limits. We will exhibit only his presentation of the Christian doctrine to the Roman emperor. To him he says: "More than all men we are your helpers and allies in promoting peace, seeing we hold this view that it is alike impossible for the wicked, the covetous, the conspirator, and also for the virtuous, to escape the notice of God, and that each man goes to *aionian* punishment or salvation, according to the desert of his actions. For if all men knew this, no one would choose wickedness, even for a short time, knowing that he goes to the *aionian* punishment of fire" (Apology I., chapter viii.). Again, he says to the emperor: "You can only kill us, which indeed does no harm to us, but to you, and to all that unjustly hate us and do not repent, brings *aionian* punishment by fire" (chapter xlv.).

If, now, we assert that Justin by *aionian* understood absolutely eternal, he is represented as not in accord with the general usage. But, as in the instance of Irenæus,

there are other parts of his writings inconsistent with that view.

## OTHER STATEMENTS.

These occur especially in his statement, in his dialogue with Trypho, of the reasonings of the old Christian by whom he was converted, and which, it is generally conceded, are indorsed by Justin as his own. Of these we propose now to give some account.

The first step in preparing the way for the doctrine of the final annihilation of the wicked is to refute the Platonic doctrine, of which we have before spoken, of the self-existence and necessary and essential immortality of the soul. Denoting the old man by *S.* (Senex), and Justin by *J.*, the dialogue thus proceeds :

*Ch. V.*

"*S.* These philosophers know nothing on this point, nor can they even prove that the soul exists at all.

"*J.* Very likely they cannot.

"*S.* Certainly they ought not to call it immortal, for if it is immortal it must be uncreated, and self-existent.

"*J.* In fact, it is held to be thus immortal by some who are called Platonic philosophers.

"*S.* But do you believe that this world is uncreated, and self-existent ?

"*J.* There are those who say so, but I do not agree with them.

"*S.* In this you are right. For what show of reason can there be for supposing that a body which has such solidity and reaction, and which is composite and changeable, and subject every day to decay and new growth, can exist without an originating cause? But if this world is not self-existent, but created, it is necessary that souls also should have been created from previous non-existence.

For they were made for the sake of man, and other living beings, even if you say that they were first created by themselves, and not in connection with their proper bodies.

*J.* It appears to me that you are correct.

*S.* So, then, they are not essentially immortal?

*J.* No; since we are agreed in the fact that the world was created.

*S.* Nevertheless, I do not affirm that all souls do in fact cease to exist at death. This truly would be a fine arrangement for the wicked! But how is it, then? Thus: The souls of the good still continue to exist somewhere in a better place, but those of the unjust and wicked in a worse place, all awaiting the time of the judgment. Then the good, being manifested as worthy of the favor of God, shall never die, but the wicked are punished so long as God wills to have them exist, and be punished."

Here by antithesis he asserts that the wicked do finally cease to exist but that they exist and are punished as long as God pleases.

THIS VIEW INDORSED BY JUSTIN.

This view Justin indorses as in accordance with what Plato has obscurely said about the world, as existing by the will of God. This he applies to the soul and all things else, and thus sustains his view: "All things which have come into being, or shall begin to exist, are by nature liable to die, and can disappear and be no more. For God only is uncreated and incorruptible, and, therefore, is God. But all things that come into being after him are created and mortal—for this reason souls also die and are punished;" i. e., after they have been sufficiently punished, as he had before said, they cease to exist.

OLD MAN RESPONDS.

To this view the old man responds with additional reasoning, as follows :

“The soul either has life in itself, or it receives it from something else. But if it has life in itself it would be the cause of life to something else, and not to itself ; as motion may be said rather to move something else than itself. That the soul lives no one can deny, but, if it lives, it lives not as being itself life, but as receiving life. Now, whatever partakes of anything is different from that of which it partakes. But the soul partakes of life, because God wills it to live ; and just so, too, it will no longer partake of life, whenever he does not desire it to live. For it cannot live of itself as God does. But as the personal man does not always exist, and body and soul are not ever united, but the soul leaves the body, and the man ceases to exist whenever this unity is dissolved, so also, when it is necessary that the soul should no longer exist, the vital spirit leaves it, and the soul is no more, but returns again thither whence it was taken,” i. e., to non-existence.

In parts of this reasoning a striking similarity to the reasoning of Irenæus is seen, and, as Justin was his senior, Irenæus may have followed his line of thought.

We have carefully considered what has been said in favor of a different translation of the old man’s statement, “I do not affirm that all souls do in fact cease to exist at death.” We cannot now enter into the principles of the case, but are assured that the translation which we have given is required by the whole context, and is the only one capable of a sound philological defense.

That Justin did hold and teach the final annihilation of the wicked the most eminent scholars concede. In the number of such Mr. Hudson appeals to Grotius, Huet,



Röpler, Du Pin, Doederlein, Münscher, Munter, Daniel, Hase, Starck, Kern, Otto, Ritter, J. P. Smith, Bloomfield, and Gieseler.

#### REASONS FOR DOUBT.

The only reason for another view is found in the strong language used by him as to *aionian* punishment. To those who have not considered the view defended by Prof. Tayler Lewis, the subject must seem to be involved in an inextricable contradiction. But, even without this principle of harmony, J. Donaldson, in his learned work on the writings of the fathers, comes definitely to the conclusion that Justin did not intend to teach a philosophical eternity of punishment, even by his strongest expressions, and that *aionios* is an indefinite word.

But, to judge fairly of the case, let us take a thorough modern believer in the absolute eternity of punishment, and is it supposable that he should, by any possibility, write such statements as have been quoted from Justin as to the annihilation of the wicked? Could any man have written them who thoroughly believed in eternal punishment?

But to remove all uncertainty, there are in Justin still other passages which put his views beyond all doubt.

Apol. I., xxi., he says, "We have been taught that ONLY those who live near to God in holiness and virtue are made immortal, but that those who live unjustly and do not reform shall be punished in *aionian* fire," that is, in the fire of the world to come.

Here he expressly states that the Christians for whom he is pleading had been taught that *only* the holy who live near to God are made immortal. Apparently to evade this conclusion, Dodds, in Clark's translations, renders *απαθανατίζεσθαι* (*apathanatizesthai*) *are deified*. But this implies

that Christians were taught in the days of Justin that the holy were in fact deified, which is false. No trace of such a doctrine can be found among the early Christians. The doctrine which Justin declares Christians were taught was, that only the holy were made immortal. His words can properly mean nothing else.

Again, in Trypho 45, he speaks of the wicked and the righteous in these words: "The wicked shall be sent to the judgment and to condemnation to fire, to be punished incessantly, but the righteous shall be free from pain and grief, incorruptible and *immortal*, and together with God." Here immortality is presented as peculiar to the righteous.

Again, in Apol. I., lii., he says that Christ "will raise the bodies of all men, and invest with immortality those of the worthy." Here the immortality of the wicked is by implication denied.

It is indeed true that Justin speaks of punishment as extending beyond any boundary that can be defined by man, and not limited to one thousand years, as Plato taught.

But in all this his motive is plain. He says that to teach that the wicked are annihilated at death would be a god-send to them, as removing all fears of future punishment. To avoid this result, and increase the power of motives to repent, he teaches the existence and sensibility of sinners in a future state, and their punishment in fire for a very long but undefinable period, because, as he says, the wicked will exist and be punished in the world to come, as long as God pleases, and no man can tell how long that is.

To make him teach more, and to assert the eternal existence and punishment of the wicked, is to involve him in a direct and inevitable self-contradiction. We are not

at liberty to impute such a contradiction to him if his statements can be so interpreted as to agree. But his statements, that the holy alone are rendered immortal, are absolute and positive, and cannot be explained away.

But his statements as to the wicked can all of them be properly explained as teaching no more than that the wicked will live in the future world, and be punished by God as long as he sees fit, even to many ages; that neither Plato nor any other man can fix a definite limit to this time; that as it depends on the will of God, it cannot be defined or bounded by man; and that it may properly be spoken of as the punishment of ages, which no man can limit, but which finally results in annihilation.

In Apol. I., xxviii., when Justin says that the devil and his angels, and the men who follow him shall be sent into fire to be punished for an unbounded (*ἀπεραντον*, *aperanton*) age, he uses the word as does Pindar, when he says, N. viii., 64, "Some men seek gold, and others (*πεδίου ἀπεραντον*) a vast or unbounded extent of land;" or when in P. ix., 61, he speaks of unbounded or immeasurable strength (*ἀλκὰς ἀπέραντου*). Again, when Justin says (Trypho 45) that the wicked are punished (*ἀπανστως απαυστος*) incessantly or without cessation, he means that this is true during the time of their punishment, however long it may be.

To illustrate the sensibility of the wicked in the future world, he quotes (Apol. I., lii.) Is. lxiv. 24, "Their worm shall not die, and their fire shall not be quenched," and says that their bodies shall be raised, and in the future life be invested with sensibility, and that God will send them into the fire of the world to come, or, as it may be translated, into the fire of ages.

In Apol. I., viii., he says, "Plato used to say that Rhada-

manthus and Minos would punish the wicked who came before them for a thousand years ; and we say that the same thing will be done, but at the hand of Christ, and upon the wicked in the same bodies, united again to their spirits, which are now to undergo the punishment of ages, and not, as Plato said, for a period of only a thousand years." It is only by assuming, without reason, that in this passage *aiônios* means eternal, instead of for ages, that eternal punishment can be proved.

And in Trypho, 130, where Justin says that the bodies of those who have transgressed are to be devoured by the worm and ceaseless fire, remaining deathless, no stress can be laid on the word deathless (*athanata*), for it simply denotes the fact that, during the time of exposure to the fire, the bodies cannot die, but not that they cannot be annihilated by God, at such time as he shall see fit.

It now is manifest that both Justin and Irenæus are intent on so stating the doctrine of annihilation that the terrors and moving power of future punishments shall not be diminished. Both of them are very careful to deny that the soul ceases to exist at death, they do not, at all, teach that the soul is material, and is dissolved with the body. They are very careful to state, in strong terms, that, after the day of judgment, there will be a fearful and long-continued punishment, enduring for ages which no one could bound.

In these things they were very unlike many modern advocates of the annihilation of the wicked. They use the very strongest language as to the nature and duration of future punishment, not being willing to release the wicked from the restraining powers of salutary fear.

## ARNOBIUS.

We come now to Arnobius. But his case need not detain us long as to the historic fact, for it is denied by no one that he taught the doctrine of the annihilation of the wicked. Prof. Shedd fully concedes it. But we will briefly consider his opinions. They agree substantially with those of Irenæus and Justin. He taught that souls have such a nature that they need God in order to secure eternal existence. If they refuse to acknowledge him, and reject his gifts and favors, they will finally be annihilated. He says, "This is the real death of man, when souls that know not God are annihilated by long-continued torment in a fierce fire." Any alleged immortality of the soul that is inconsistent with this he repudiates and disproves. And certainly no considerate Christian can adopt or defend the idea of an endless existence that is not upheld by God, and that cannot be annihilated if God sees fit. It is a question as to the fact. Arnobius believed the fact to be that the wicked will be annihilated, in the manner above stated.

## QUESTIONS.

But the questions may arise: "Who was Arnobius? What is the weight of his opinion? Was he eminent as a Christian?"

We reply, he was an African, from Sicca in Numidia, once a teacher of rhetoric and an opponent of Christianity. After his conversion he wrote a vigorous work in its defense. He also taught theological scholars, among whom was the eminent and classical Lactantius. Jerome commends his writings as worthy of study, for their learning, with those of Origen, Tertullian, and others. Neander speaks highly of his defense of Christianity, conceding at the same time that in a number of points he was not ortho-

dox according to the views of the Church. Certainly he has never had the prestige and influence of Irenæus. He lived about A. D. 250–300.

These, then, are the leading defenders of the doctrine of the annihilation of the wicked. We mention none of the apostolic fathers as teaching this doctrine, herein differing materially from Mr. Hudson and others. But even he concedes that it is not expressly taught by them or by the early creeds. It is inferred rather from such facts as this, that Christ is spoken of as the giver of immortality to the good, and that the endless punishment of the wicked is not expressly taught. But, as we have said, that question was not then up for discussion, and it is unsafe to infer any doctrine from incidental remarks, or from omissions. We shall advert to them again in speaking of the doctrine of endless punishment, for, though none of them refer at all to Christ's sentence on the wicked, yet one of them, *Hermas*, speaks of endless sin, and endless exclusion from heaven—but says nothing of fire, or of physical torment of any kind.

Mr. Hudson's appeal to *Athanasius* we also reject. It is true that that eminent father taught that man was by the sin of Adam made liable to annihilation, and that if Christ had not interposed he would have been annihilated. But he did interpose, and by his death secured the resurrection of all men, and redeemed them from annihilation. *Theodore of Mopsuestia* from these premises inferred the doctrine of universal restoration, otherwise the resurrection would be no blessing but a curse to the majority of mankind. *Athanasius* did not carry out his premises to this issue, nor did he teach annihilation. He was busy with the Trinity, and is quite reticent as to the details of eternal retribution.

We turn next to the Christian schools in which the doctrine of universal restoration was taught. From the days of Origen, as we have seen, an extended and widespread movement existed in favor of that doctrine. Of the leading agents in this movement we propose to take a comprehensive and critical view.

## CHAPTER XXV.

### ORIGEN AND THEODORE OF MOPSUESTIA.

WE have considered the development of the doctrine of the annihilation of the wicked by Irenæus, of the school of John in Asia Minor, and also by Justin Martyr and Arnobius. We now come to the schools in which the doctrine of the final restoration of all men to holiness was taught, or favored.

#### SCHOOL, WHAT?

The word school is used in two senses: One, more general, to denote certain teachers and those who adopt their opinions, though not collected in one place where buildings are erected and teachers employed for purposes of instruction. The other is applied more strictly to denote institutions at which scholars are gathered, and teachers, libraries, and buildings, are provided for their instruction.

Of the former kind were the schools of Asia Minor and of Northern Africa. Of the latter were the schools of Alexandria, Cesarea, Antioch, and Edessa. Of these, that of Alexandria and that of Cesarea were properly schools truly Origenistic; that at Antioch, and that at Edessa, were schools under the influence of Theodore of Mopsuestia and Diodore of Tarsus.

#### ERROR OF HISTORIANS.

As Theodore agreed with Origen in teaching the doc-



trine of final restoration, he has, by some historians, been spoken of as of the school of Origen. Hagenbach (§ 142, note 6) speaks of Diodore of Tarsus, and Theodore of Mopsuestia, as adopting the milder notions of Origen concerning a final restoration. This may have led Prof. Shedd, who follows Hagenbach as to his authorities, and is misled by him, to consider them as of the school of Origen.

But as the principles of interpretation adopted by Theodore, as well as his anthropology, were opposed to those of Origen, the result in which they agreed was reached in ways so different that it is not proper to call Theodore a scholar of Origen. Moreover, the history of the opinions of Origen, and their final condemnation under Justinian, is entirely separate from the history of the opinions of Theodore, and their condemnation under the same emperor. In addition to this, the extension of the influence of Theodore among the Nestorian churches was peculiar to him, and was not at all shared by Origen.

#### ORIGEN AND THEODORE CONTRASTED.

We will, therefore, before continuing the history of the opinions of Origen, and then of Theodore, give a summary statement of their points of difference, and as Theodore, though a voluminous writer in his day, is little known by us, since his condemnation led to the destruction of the greater part of his works, we shall be more full in the presentation of his opinions. A great ignorance of them seems to be manifested even by some intelligent historians.

Theodore rejected almost entirely the spiritual, allegorical, and mystical interpretation of Origen; and, in common with the Antiochian school, adopted the principles of historical and grammatical interpretation.

## ORIGEN ON FREE-WILL AND PREEXISTENCE.

The system of Origen, also, was based on free-will, carried to its utmost extent, and never lost, so that reformation in sinners would be always possible. He also held to the preexistence of men, and that the original sinfulness of man in this world was the result of his fall and transgressions in a previous state of being. This fall, however, they had the power to avoid, and multitudes did avoid it. The hope of their final restoration lies in the fact that they have this indestructible power of free agency, and that God is able, in the course of ages of suffering, to induce them finally to use it aright, and to return to him, in love and obedience.

## OPPOSITE VIEW OF THEODORE.

The fundamental principles of Theodore differed entirely from these. He did not hold to preexistence, or to any such extreme power of free agency as Origen taught. He held, on the other hand, that sin is an unavoidable part of the development and education of man; that some carry it to a greater extent than others, but that God will finally overrule it for their final establishment in good.

## DR. BUSHNELL ANTICIPATED.

His principles of development and establishment in stable virtue, through an experience of sinning, in some points anticipate those of Dr. Bushnell, except that the latter does not push them to the result of universal restoration. Neander thus states his fundamental principles: "Human nature, nay, the nature of all created spirits, is, according to this system, so constituted from the beginning that it could no otherwise than by a redemption attain to its final destination." Of course, sin is unavoidable. This resembles Dr. Bushnell's idea of the necessity of turning the corner

of a fall and redemption. But Dr. Bushnell would not agree with all the statements of Theodore, some of which we give, from the records of the Fifth Œcumenical Council, in which he was condemned for his Nestorian doctrines.

#### TWO STATES.

He says: "It pleased God to divide his creatures into two states. One is the present, in which he has made all things mutable; the other is to occur when he shall renew all things and render them immutable. Of this final state he has showed us the beginning, in the dispensation of our Lord Jesus Christ, whom in his human nature he raised from the dead, and rendered immortal in body and immutable in mind, by which he demonstrated that the same result shall be effected IN ALL HIS CREATURES." To illustrate the extent of his last remark, he proceeds to say that millions of angels and spirits will be established with men in immutability.

This immutability is to be the result of a final and full communion with God, in order thus to be pervaded by a principle of divine life. Any created beings, left to themselves, would be sure to sin and to need redemption.

#### REASON OF THE FIRST STATE.

The reason why God left his creatures to themselves, in the first mutable and sinful-state, was that they could in no other way than by an experiment of evil learn the worth of the opposite blessings. In book v., "De Creatura," he says: "God knew that men would sin in all ways, but permitted this result to come to pass, knowing that it would ultimately be for their advantage. For since God created man when he did not exist, and made him ruler of so extended a system, and offered so great blessings for his enjoyment, it was impossible that he should have not pre-

vented the entrance of sin, if he had not known that it would be ultimately for his advantage."

#### WHAT THE BENEFIT?

But, it may be asked, what is the benefit to be derived from leaving the creatures at first to a state of mutability and sin? This question he thus answers: "It was not possible that in any other way we should have a full knowledge of the nature and consequences of sin, and the evils of our sinful passions, and know our weakness, disclosed in these experiences, so as to show by contrast the greatness of the immutability to be given to us, unless it had been so ordained by God from the beginning, that by experiment and comparison we might know the magnitude of those infinite benefits that are to be conferred on us. On this account knowing that it would, on the whole, be for our advantage, he permitted sin to enter." And, again: "It is the prerogative of a rational creature to distinguish between good and evil things. If, therefore, there were not opposite qualities, it would not be possible for him to discern the differences. Therefore, at the outset, he introduced these great contrarieties into his creation."

#### GENERAL VIEW.

We will give another extract from Theodore, in which some of the things already said are repeated, but in new relations, and with a more full view of his system: "God did not introduce death among men unwillingly, and contrary to his judgment, nor did he permit the entrance of sin for no beneficial end. He was not unable to prevent it if he desired, but he permitted it, because he knew that it would be beneficial to us, or rather to all intelligent beings, that there should be first a dispensation including evils, and

that then they should be removed and UNIVERSAL GOOD take their place. Therefore God divided the creation into two states, the present and the future. In the latter he will bring ALL to immortality and immutability. In the former he gives us over to death and mutability. For if he had made us at first immortal and immutable, we should not have differed from irrational animals, who do not understand the peculiar characteristics by which they are distinguished. For if we had been ignorant of mutability we could not have understood the good of immutability. Ignorant of death, we could not have known the true worth of immortality. Ignorant of corruption, we could not have properly valued incorruption. Ignorant of the burden of sinful passions, we could not have duly exulted in freedom from such passions. In a word, ignorant of an experiment of evils, we should not have been able properly to understand the opposite forms of good."

#### AGENCY OF CHRIST.

In the view of Theodore, therefore, this universal restitution of all to holiness was the end aimed at in the first dispensation, involving sin and to be effected through it. Christ and his cross, moreover, he regarded as the centre of the great movement toward universal restitution. In support of this view he appealed to such passages as Col. i. 19, 20: "For it pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell; and having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth or things in heaven." These, then, were the doctrines of Theodore "the Interpreter," the great oracle of the Nestorians and of their schools.

## PERSON OF CHRIST.—NESTORIANISM.

Out of this system grew his peculiar views of the person of Christ, whose supreme divinity he fully believed. God ordered, in his view, that in his human nature he should go through a development which should be the type and exemplar of the development to be wrought in us, and therefore he maintained that sharp separation between the human and divine in the person of Christ that resulted in Nestorianism. For these reasons to the Nestorian churches he was ever the great Scriptural interpreter and theological oracle.

## NESTORIAN LITURGY.

We are now prepared to understand the full import of the following extracts from the sacramental liturgy which he drew up for the Nestorian churches, in which he introduced the great proof passage from Colossians, which we have quoted. (*See E. Renaudot's "Oriental Liturgies," vol. ii., p. 610.*)

In the opening part of the service, in accordance with the statements of Theodore as to the relations of Christ to the harmonizing and establishment of the universe in holiness, the priest sets forth "the Son of man, an acceptable victim offered to God the Lord of all *for all creatures in the universe.*"

Then, in prayer, the priest reviews the dispensation of the incarnation, and says of Christ: "He is the head of the Church, the perfecter of all beings, by whom all things are accomplished. He, by the Eternal Spirit, offered himself an unspotted offering to God, and sanctified us by the oblation of his body once made. Moreover, he made peace by the blood of his cross, among those in heaven and in earth." After this he says, "Let us celebrate the great, tremendous,

sacred, and divine mystery, by which a great salvation was made for the whole human race."

After this he says in prayer: "We offer with contrite heart and humble spirit, before thy glorious Trinity, this sacrifice, living and holy, which is the mystery of the Lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world, asking and entreating before thee, O Lord, that thy adorable divinity may take pleasure in it, and by thy compassion this pure and sacred offering, by which thou art appeased and reconciled, may be accepted in behalf of the sins of the whole world."

Farther on he says, "This sacrament is offered for all kinds of men who live in sin and error, that by thy grace thou wouldst make them worthy to know thy truth and adore thy majesty, that they may know thee whose will it is that all men should live, and turn to and acknowledge the truth."

The true meaning of this liturgy no one can doubt who knows the system of Theodore, and notes the emphatic extension of the atonement to all the universe declared in it, presenting Christ as the perfecter of all creatures, and who considers the fact that it does not confine the efficacy of the sacrament almost or quite exclusively to the Church, as the Romish liturgy does, and others of that class, but extends it to all mankind without exception, and to the whole creation. Any one who will read this liturgy side by side with the Romish will not fail to be struck with this radical difference.

Of the liturgy of Theodore, Renaudot says it is the second of those generally used in the Nestorian Church, and is found in all the manuscripts. It was also translated for the use of the churches of India.

Of the Nestorian churches, he says they peculiarly re-

vere Theodore, and call him, by way of eminence, *the Interpreter*, on account of his numerous commentaries on the word of God.

## THEODORE'S CONFESSION OF FAITH.

In Theodore's confession of faith this relation of Christ to the salvation of all is once more clearly presented. Of him he says : " He is called the second Adam, by the blessed Paul ; constituted an Adam of the same nature, and showing to us the future state, and exhibiting so much difference from the first Adam as will exist between him who bestows the ineffable gifts of the future state, and him who began the present mournful state of things. In like manner, he is called the second man, as disclosing the second state, because Adam began the first, a state mortal, and possibly full of many pains, in which he showed a typical similitude to him. But Christ the Lord began the second state. He in the future, revealed from heaven, will restore us all into communion with himself. For the apostle says, The first man was of the earth earthy, the second man is the Lord from heaven, that is, who is to appear hereafter thence, that he may restore all to the likeness of himself."

Those who recall the statements of Dorner and other leading historians, of the influence of Theodore as a theologian, and the most eminent divine, and the master of the East, will regard as of great historical moment the statements we have given coming directly from himself. Of the influence of these Nestorian churches more will be said hereafter.



## CHAPTER XXVI.

### *THEODORE OF MOPSUESTIA AND THE NESTORIANS.*

THE history of the Nestorians and of their connection with Theodore of Mopsuestia is less known than it should be. In like manner, the history of their connection with the destinies of humanity through the Arabians is less understood than their merits require. Indeed, there is not a more interesting and important chapter in the development of human destiny than this.

#### FOLLOWERS OF THEODORE.

We have exhibited in contrast the principles of Origen and of Theodore of Mopsuestia. We have seen that, although they agreed in the doctrine of the final restoration of all beings to holiness, yet their systems were based on very different fundamental principles. It should now be added that the range of their influence was very different. The followers of Origen were chiefly in the Greek and Latin Churches. Those of Theodore in Central and Eastern Asia. They are commonly known as the Nestorians, and are by the so-called Catholic Church reckoned among the heretical sects.

#### THE CHURCH—WHAT?

But, in order to understand the relations of the Nestorians to Christianity and the Church, it is of special moment to know what the Church was by which they were

condemned, and by which Theodore was anathematized. In our history before Christ, the geographical scene of our investigations was limited. It was mainly confined to Palestine, and to the scenes of the captivities in Egypt and Babylon. After the coming of Christ, it was enlarged until it included large portions of Asia, Europe, and Africa.

## TRIPLE DIVISION.

Beginning in Palestine, Christianity extended its conquests until, in the sixth century, there were three great geographical divisions of the Christian body, two of which were sometimes called churches. The Western Church included Italy, Gaul, Spain, England, and the western part of Northern Africa. Its centre was Rome, and it was called sometimes the Latin Church. The Greek Church included the rest of the Roman Empire to the east of the Western Church, to the Euphrates. This was also called the Greek Church, whose centre was Constantinople. East of this, and without the bounds of the Roman Empire, there was a large body of Christians, not united around one centre. They were, to a great extent, Christians who had been driven out by the other two churches because they did not agree with the Œcumenical Councils, so called, in their decisions as to the person of Christ. Those thus driven out were organized as separate, independent, dissenting churches, not centralized by one government, but called heretical sects by those from whom they dissented. Prominent among these independent bodies were the Jacobites and the Nestorians, called sometimes the Chaldean Christians.

It is a matter of indispensable necessity to form a clear idea of the condition and extent of all these churches at the sixth century, in order to obtain a vivid conception of

the early history of the Church, for that history lies to us in a kind of world beyond the flood.

#### THE FLOOD.

By the flood, I mean the great Mohammedan invasion and conquests. Of Christendom, as it then was, the greater part came under Mohammedan control, and to this day Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch—in short, all the great centres of the Christian world as it then was, except one, Rome—are under Mohammedan sway. Moreover, every one of the great ancient centres of theological study is at this hour in the hands of the Mohammedans. This is true of Alexandria and Carthage, in Africa, of Asia Minor, and of Cesarea, Antioch, Edessa, and Nisibis, in Asia. To understand the history of those six centuries, we must go back beyond that Mohammedan flood, and think of Christendom as it then was, and not of Christendom as it now is, for what is now the most powerful part of Christendom was not then included in it at all, but was under the sway of German barbarism and idolatry.

#### THE CHURCH OUTNUMBERED.

It is of more importance to do this, inasmuch as statements are often made of the Church, collectively, that will fall asunder at once when tested by an accurate and comprehensive view of geography and of history.

Although, according to common parlance, THE CHURCH had condemned these independent churches as heretical sects, yet two of them, the Nestorians and the Jacobites, soon became so numerous in Central and Eastern Asia that they outnumbered both the Greek and Latin Churches united. Of this fact Gibbon gives a statement, based on authorities, in his great history (chapter xlvii., vol. iii., p. 272, Harper's edition). Dr. Draper, in his "History of the Intel-

lectual Development of Europe," makes the same statement (p. 291). To give some idea of the extent of the Nestorian Church, it is sufficient to say that, at the time of the capture of Bagdad by Hulaku Chan, the Nestorian Patriarch was recognized by twenty-five metropolitan bishops as the head of the Eastern Church. A list of these is given by Layard ("Nineveh," vol. i., p. 214). Of them he says: "This list will show the success of the Chaldean (Nestorian) missions, and the influence which they possessed at this time in Asia. The sees of these metropolitans were scattered over the continent, from the shores of the Caspian to the Chinese Seas, and from the most northern boundaries of Scythia to the southern extremity of the Indian Peninsula." When to the Jacobites and Nestorians we add the Armenians and the other independent bodies, we see how entirely they outnumbered what was called the Church of which the Roman emperor was the head, and the doctrines of which were dictated by his authority. Indeed, these Oriental churches did not hesitate to charge on the Church that excommunicated them, and truly, that it was not a free Church, but the slave of the emperor. This idea they expressed in the word *Melchites* ("King's men"), by which they designated them.

## NESTORIAN CHURCH AND THEODORE.

We shall at this time consider only the Nestorian churches, inasmuch as they stand in a peculiar relation to Theodore of Mopsuestia, the father of Nestorian views as to the person of Christ. As we have seen, Theodore and Diodore of Tarsus held and taught universal restoration. We have given an outline of the views of Theodore. To what extent these views were positively adopted by the clergy of the Nestorian churches, it is impossible to say.

Certain great facts only are sure. These views were introduced by Theodore into the liturgy which he drew up for the Nestorian Churches. Of this Renaudot says that it was generally used in the Nestorian Church, and is found in all the manuscripts, and that it was translated for the use of the churches of India. Moreover, there was no protest against these views ever issued by any of the Nestorian churches or clergy. On the other hand, Theodore is spoken of at all times and everywhere as the great interpreter of the Word of God. Neander says that the seminaries of the Nestorians were conducted in the spirit of Theodore of Mopsuestia. It cannot be denied that the doctrine of universal restoration is an essential part of his system, and is inwrought into its whole development. Yet, besides Theodore, and his confession and liturgy, I can find the doctrine expressly stated in no other Nestorian creed and no Nestorian writer.

#### NESTORIAN CREED.

They adhered to the general councils up to the condemnation of Nestorius. Layard gives their creed as it was up to that date, and it differs very little from the Nicene creed. (Layard's "Nineveh," ii., 219, New York). In this creed no reference is made to eternal punishment. After this they seem to have issued no additional creed of their own. Hence, the Rev. T. Laurie, a missionary to the modern Nestorians, says of them: "It is difficult to give an accurate statement of the doctrines of the Nestorians. For as a church they have no regular confession of faith, and their treatises on Christian doctrine express the views of individuals, rather than the belief of the whole body" ("Dr. Grant and the Mountain Nestorians," p. 55). But to a certain extent Theodore's sacramental liturgy is practically

a confession of faith, for it sets forth the incarnation, and its ends and results, as based on the unfolding of the Trinity.

#### INFLUENCE OF THE DOCTRINE.

It is a matter of great interest to ascertain what was the influence exerted by the declaration of this doctrine by Theodore. Were those who came most under his influence injured thereby? Were those who held the doctrine of eternal punishment elevated thereby above the followers of Theodore? Universalism in America has generally been connected with a denial of the Trinity and the evangelical views of atonement, depravity, and regeneration. It was not so with ancient Restorationism. Its advocates were in all other respects orthodox. Were they less imbued with the spirit of active, self-denying missionary Christianity?

#### REPLY AS TO NESTORIANS.

Account for it as we may, the fact is beyond denial, that the Nestorian churches were the most distinguished for a missionary spirit of any of those ages. They, too, were most inclined to reform the leading errors of the Church. They were the providential channel through which Europe was aroused from the ignorance and torpor of the dark ages. Of them in the fifth century Gieseler says: "They were found in every part of Asia and were of great use in diffusing the learning of Greece in that part of the world, as well as in founding schools and hospitals. At a later period they became the instructors of the Arabians" (Hist. Period ii., sec. 87). As late as the fourteenth century Gieseler says, "Of all the Christian parties, the Nestorians alone had penetrated as yet into the interior and eastern parts of Asia" (Period iii., sec. 90).

## DR. ANDERSON.

Of the extent of their missionary enterprises, Dr. Anderson gives an account in an extract taken from Tracey's "History of Missions." Of the Nestorians he says: "This sect continued to flourish, though occasionally persecuted under the Persians, the Saracens, and the Tartars. They had celebrated schools for theology and general education. For centuries they maintained missions in Tartary, China, and other Eastern regions. Their churches were scattered from Syria and Cyprus to Peking, and from the coast of Malabar and Ceylon to the borders of Siberia" (R. Anderson, "History," vol. i., p. 167). Dr. Anderson, in a note on p. 168, speaks thus of their seminaries: "Narses, on being expelled from Edessa, opened a school at Nisibis, A. D. 490, which became celebrated. About the same time Acacius, also from Edessa, established a school at Seleucia. It was revived in 530, and was in existence as late as 605. A school was established at Dorkena, A. D. 585. At Bagdad were two schools in 832, and two others were in its neighborhood. Schools existed at Terhana, Mahuza, Maraga, and Adiabene, in Assyria, and at Maraga in Azerbaijan. There were also schools in Elam, Persia, Khorassan, and Arabia. The school at Nisibis had a three years' course of study. The studies to a great extent were theological; but to the study of the Bible they added, in the schools generally, the study of grammar, rhetoric, poetry, dialectics, arithmetic, geometry, music, astronomy, medicine," etc. (p. 168).

## DR. DRAPER.

Of the anathematized Nestorians Dr. Draper says: "The philosophical tendency of the vanquished was soon indicated by their actions. While their leader (Nestorius)

was tormented in an African oasis, many of them emigrated to the Euphrates, and founded the Chaldean (Nestorian) Church. Under its auspices the college at Edessa, with several connected schools, arose. In these were translated into Syriac many Greek and Latin works, as those of Aristotle and Pliny. It was the Nestorians who, in connection with the Jews, founded the medical college of Djondesabour, and first instituted a system of academical honors *which has descended to our times*. It was the Nestorians who were not only permitted by the khalifs the free exercise of their religion, but were intrusted with the education of the children of the great Mohammedan families, a liberality in striking contrast to the fanaticism of Europe. The Khalif Alraschid went so far as even to place all his public schools under the superintendence of John Masue, one of that sect. Under the auspices of these learned men, the Arabian academies were furnished with translations of Greek authors, and vast libraries were collected in Asia" (p. 290).

Of the expulsion of the Nestorians from the Church by Cyril, Dr. Draper truly says: "The expulsion of this party from Constantinople was accomplished by the same persons and policy concerned in destroying philosophy in Alexandria. St. Cyril was the representative of an illiterate and unscrupulous faction that had come into power through intrigues with the females of the imperial court, and bribery of eunuchs and parasites. The same spirit that had murdered Hypatia tormented Nestorius to death. Of the contending parties, one was respectable and had a tincture of learning; the other ignorant, and not hesitating at the employment of brute force, deportation, assassination. Unfortunately for the world, the unscrupulous party carried the day."



Is it not a striking fact that the midnight of the dark ages in Europe, hastened by Cyril, coincided with the noon-day of Arabic learning, kindled at the fires of the Nestorians, expelled for no good reason from the so-called Church?

HUMBOLDT.

Alexander von Humboldt, in the second volume of his "Kosmos," is quoted by Dr. Schaff as recognizing this obligation of the Arabs to the Nestorians, and of the world to them through the Arabians. He says of the Nestorian school of Edessa: "It awakened the scientific search for *materia medica* in the mineral and vegetable kingdoms. When it was dissolved by Christian fanaticism under Zeno, the Isaurian, the Nestorians scattered toward Persia, where they soon attained political importance, and established a new and thronged medical institute at Dschondisapur, in Khusistan. They succeeded in spreading their science and their faith to China."

Of the Arabs he says that "they were a race which had long lived in free converse with Nature, and had preserved a more fresh sensibility to every sort of study of Nature than the people of Greek and Italian cities. What gives the Arabian epoch the universal importance which we must here insist upon, is in great part connected with the trait of national character just indicated. The Arabians, we repeat, are to be regarded as the proper founders of the *physical sciences* in the sense which we are now accustomed to attach to the word."

MOSHEIM.

In addition to the merits of the Nestorians thus far indicated, we ought to mention another. We will express it in the words of Mosheim: "It is to the honor of this sect that, of all the Christians resident in the East, they have

preserved themselves most free from the numberless superstitions which have found their way into the Greek and Latin Churches." Layard illustrates this statement in many particulars, such as the rejection of the worship of the Virgin Mary, of the worship of images, of the doctrine of purgatory, and transubstantiation, and of the celibacy of the clergy. At first all the clergy were allowed to marry. Afterward the patriarch and bishops were forbidden.

## CONCLUSIONS.

In view of these facts one thing is plain. The belief of the doctrine of eternal punishment, as it was held, did not save the so-called Church from the dark ages of intellectual and moral degradation. On the other hand, the full and firm belief and earnest advocacy of universal restoration by Theodore of Mopsuestia did not prevent those churches who revered him as the great interpreter of the Word of God from unexampled missionary enterprises, from establishing wide-spread systems of education, from illuminating the Arabs, and through them the dark churches who had sunk into a midnight gloom.

As to the real efficient causes in each case, those who can must judge. It is a field for deep thought and careful inquiry.

## CHAPTER XXVII.

### *THE FATE OF ORIGEN'S DOCTRINE OF UNIVERSAL RESTORATION.*

WE have said, in a previous chapter, that the doctrine of Origen as to universal restoration was not condemned and anathematized until the year 544, in the local council of Constantinople, more than three centuries after it was first published. A view of the steps by which the early state of freedom of opinion of which we have spoken was terminated, by the condemnation of Origen, will throw great light on the state of opinion on the question of retribution during those intervening centuries.

#### A TEST.

It may be assumed that, when an eminent religious teacher is at any time assailed, if he holds sentiments generally regarded as heretical and dangerous at that time, they will be made points of attack. Thus, at the present time the doctrine of Universal Salvation in any form is regarded, in most or all American evangelical bodies, as a dangerous error. Now, if an eminent religious teacher holding this doctrine were to be made the subject of repeated attacks, is it possible that, while he was assailed on various other points of secondary moment, this, which is esteemed so great and so dangerous an error, would remain unnoticed? We know that it is impossible.

## ANOTHER TEST.

Let us make another assumption. If, during any centuries there were men of great eminence as scholars and divines, and celebrated for their elaborate and learned writings in defense of orthodoxy, is it possible that they would leave unnoticed and unassailed what they regarded as a great and dangerous error? For example, take such a man as Athanasius, the great father of Orthodoxy, renowned for his labored treatises against the Arians, is it to be supposed that he would leave any doctrine which he regarded as a great and dangerous error unassailed? Would he content himself with simply stating his own belief to the contrary? Would he not assail it by argument as he did Arianism? Would he not seek to annihilate it by the full power of his intellect? Would he not lift up a voice of warning, loud and clear, against it?

## A THIRD TEST.

Let us make another supposition. Suppose, then, that a great œcumenical council were to be convened in behalf of orthodoxy, would any man who held to what was then regarded as a great and dangerous error be invited to it? Still more, would he be allowed to take the lead in it? Would they elect him as their representative in an extended visitation of the churches? If in the recent meeting of the Evangelical Alliance so eminent a Universalist as Dr. Ryder, of Chicago, or such a noted Universalist divine as Dr. Thayer, were not only gladly welcomed, but assigned leading parts in the services of the occasion, and one of them sent to England as a representative of the body, would it not be a fair and irresistible conclusion that Universalism was not regarded as a great and dangerous error?

## RESULTS.

Now, these are the tests to be applied to the Church before the sixth century to discover the real status of Universalism. It is not enough to find in Athanasius, or Chrysostom, and other eminent men, as we do, an occasional indication that they publicly professed to believe in eternal punishment. What we want to know is, how they regarded and treated those who held the opposite doctrine. What did they do to resist it and oppose its spread? If we apply these tests, we shall find that the feeling that now exists in evangelical bodies against this doctrine did not exist, and was not *fully developed* until in the sixth century. Let us now trace the course of events from the day of Origen till the day of the condemnation of his doctrine of restoration in the local council of Constantinople.

## ORIGEN EARLY ASSAILED.

It cannot be denied that Origen was the subject of attack from the time of the publication of his first theological treatise, the work on the first principles of theology. But we should not wonder at this. That work took a wide range. It spoke of God, of the Trinity, of the incarnation, of the person of Christ, of preëxistence, of creation and the material world, of the body of Christ and of men, of the resurrection and the spiritual body, of the interpretation of Scripture, and other topics too numerous to mention. In particular he opposed the gross doctrines of the millennarians who taught the speedy advent of Christ to reign in a worldly kingdom that should destroy the Roman Empire. In short, his active mind pervaded the whole field of thought, and stimulated not only his generation, but all the great scholars of the following generations. He

was above any mind of his age, and furnished material of thought for all the leading minds of coming ages. He was therefore widely open to attack, and might have been assailed on twenty points, or even more, without censuring his doctrine of final restoration. Such in fact was the case.

## ASSAULT OF DEMETRIUS.

He was first assailed by his bishop, Demetrius of Alexandria, who first deposed and then excommunicated him on the ground of ecclesiastical irregularities, in making himself a eunuch from a false construction of Christ's words in Matt. xix. 12, and afterward being ordained a presbyter in Palestine, without leave from his bishop. But Jerome expressly says that he was condemned "not on account of any new doctrines, not on account of any heresy, as mad dogs now pretend," but from jealousy of the glory of his eloquence and knowledge. But the Bishops of Palestine, Phœnicia, Arabia, and Achaia, refused to acknowledge his deposition and excommunication, and he founded a new theological school at Cesarea, which became illustrious and powerful. This was about 232.

## MISREPRESENTATION.

He also suffered by misrepresentation. Of him Gieseler says: "Even in the lifetime of Origen his peculiar notions were as often opposed as approved; so that he found it necessary by a public confession of faith to attempt to remove the unfavorable impressions made not so much by his theology, as by the exaggerations and misrepresentations of common report."

## ASSAULT OF METHODIUS.

After his death, about 250, he was first openly assailed, in three treatises by Methodius, Bishop of Olympos, and

afterward of Tyre. This was near 300. If, now, the doctrine of universal restoration was then regarded as a dangerous error, we should expect to find it in one of these treatises. Was it so? Did Methodius lift up a voice of warning against it? No. Against what errors, then, did he inveigh? Errors as to the resurrection, and his theory of creation, preëxistence, etc., and his views of the witch of Endor. In Alexandria, also, Peter the bishop opposed the doctrine of preëxistence.

#### NEW ASSAULTS AND A VINDICATION.

When the Trinitarian controversy came on, all of Origen's writings were scrutinized as to their bearing on the controversy, and some assailed him as favoring heretical views. So great was the excitement against him on this and other grounds that, about 310, Pamphilus and Eusebius wrote a labored vindication of him. Of this all but the first book is lost, but fortunately this contains all the charges against him that his defenders could find. These were nine in number. How, then, was the assault conducted at that time? Did his assailants include the doctrine of universal restoration among his errors? No; it is not even alluded to. But some did charge him with denying all future retribution. And it deserves particular notice that, in refuting this charge, his defenders adduced passages proving clearly that he did hold to future retribution, but proving just as clearly that he regarded it as limited, and remedial, and to terminate in universal restoration. Had this been then regarded as a dangerous error, would his defenders thus have given it needless publicity? In the year 330 Marcellus of Ancyra, himself a Universalist, opposed some of Origen's views on the Trinity. Eustathius also opposed his view of the witch of Endor.

## ASSAULT OF EPIPHANIUS.

Pass on now to the year 376, and his great enemy, Epiphanius, the assailant of all heresies and heretics, leads a crusade against Origen. In his "Panarion" he professedly exposes the heresies of Origen. How is it now? Has universal restoration become a heresy yet? Not at all. We have carefully examined his book, and cannot find it. It is not till about 394, in his letter to John of Jerusalem, that he calls in question any part of the doctrine of universal restoration. Even then it is not the doctrine of the salvation of all men, but of the salvation of the devil, that he condemns.

## COMBINATION FORMED.

In the final crisis of condemnation, A. D. 399 and 400, in which Epiphanius, Jerome, and Theophilus of Egypt, combine their forces, Origen is condemned in a synod; but even then the doctrine of the universal salvation of the race is not condemned, but the doctrine of Christ's death for the salvation of the devil. Still, since there was at that time a general and indefinite condemnation of Origen and his works and readers, it tended to suppress Origenism in all its forms. Nevertheless, through the fifth century he had many followers, especially in Palestine.

## FINAL CONDEMNATION.

At last, in the sixth century, under the influence of a quarrel in Palestine between the followers of Origen and his enemies, the Emperor Justinian was brought into the conflict. The opponents of Origen indoctrinated him in the controversy, and furnished him with arguments and extracts; and the emperor, ambitious to shine as a theologian as well as a legislator and a statesman, wrote an elaborate letter to Mennas, the Archbishop of Constanti-



nople, in which he professes to refute at length the errors of Origen, and the doctrine of universal restoration, in its full form, was, for the first time, included among them, and was condemned with an imperial anathema with the rest. The archbishop being thus furnished by the emperor with theological arguments, and with the requisite anathemas, assembled an obedient council at Constantinople, and carried out the mandates of the emperor, in 544. This council was not an œcumenical council, but an imperial synod of the bishops in and about Constantinople.

#### EMINENT MEN.

It deserves notice that, up to this time in the Greek Church, there had been no attempt made by eminent men to refute universal restoration. Let us look back over this long period, and ask who are the great men who distinguished themselves as opponents of the doctrine of universal restoration, as they did against the Arian heresy? Did Athanasius so distinguish himself, or Gregory of Nazianzum, or Basil the Great, or Gregory of Nyssa, or Cyril of Jerusalem, or Ambrose, or Hilary, or Chrysostom? As a matter of fact, there is no treatise of any kind by any leading mind, such as Edwards against Chauncey in modern times, or the orations of Athanasius against the Arians. The only apparent exception to this remark is Augustine, in the Latin Church; but even he treated the subject superficially, and not with the thoroughness with which he treated the Pelagian heresy. In particular, he does not meet the argument of Origen and his followers from 1 Cor. xv. 28, which is a kind of corner-stone to their system. Nor does Justinian touch the argument from these and other similar passages.

Beyond all doubt, however, Augustine led the way in

that style of reasoning on the subject which now prevails in the orthodox world.

#### FIRST COUNCIL OF CONSTANTINOPLE.

Let us now turn to the first great Œcumenical Council of Constantinople, A. D. 381, in which the doctrine of the Trinity was completed by a decree as to the Holy Spirit; and the scale was turned toward the permanent triumph of Orthodox Trinitarianism. Who is the great intellectual leader of this council after the resignation of Gregory of Nazianzum? Neander says, "Gregory of Nyssa seems now, by the superiority of his well-trained intellect, to have acquired special influence over the doctrinal transactions of the council." Dr. Schaff also says, "The council intrusted to him, as 'one of the pillars of Catholic orthodoxy,' a tour of visitation to Arabia and Jerusalem, where disturbances had broken out which threatened a schism" (vol. ii., p. 906). But who was this so-honored Gregory of Nyssa? He was a second Origen in his views of free-agency and universal restoration, and that openly and with elaborate and oft-repeated arguments. This doctrine underlies and colors his whole system. Nor is this the only case.

#### TESTIMONY OF HISTORIANS.

Neander says of the Oriental or Greek Church that "many respectable church teachers stood forth, without injuring their reputation for orthodoxy, as advocates of universal restoration." He mentions in particular, besides Gregory of Nyssa, Diodore of Tarsus and Theodore of Mopsuestia. Gieseler says: "Gregory of Nyssa and Didymus were known as Origenists, and many others held to single points of Origen's creed without being, therefore, attacked. The belief in the unalienable power of amend-

ment in all intelligent beings, and the limited duration of future punishment, was so general even in the West, and among the opponents of Origen, that it seemed entirely independent of his system, to which doubtless its origin must be traced" (vol. i., p. 212). Augustine himself says, "Some, nay rather, multitudes, do not believe in the eternal punishment of the condemned" (*Enchirid.*, 112). Doederlein says, after giving the condemning decree of Justinian, "That was not the belief of all, and, in proportion as any one was eminent in learning in Christian antiquity, the more did he cherish and defend the hope of the termination of future torments" (*Theol.*, ii., 199).

#### THE CONCLUSION.

But at last the time came when the final Origenistic controversies, and the condemnation of Origen by Justinian and his council, caused this belief to be regarded as something decidedly heretical.

Thus it appears, by applying penetrating tests to history, that the modern orthodox views as to the doctrine of eternal punishment, as opposed to final restoration, were not fully developed and established till the middle of the sixth century, and that, then, they were not established by thorough argument, but by imperial authority.

It is also a striking fact that, while Origen lies under a load of odium as a heretic, Gregory of Nyssa, who taught the doctrine of the restoration of all things more fully even than Origen, has been canonized, and stands high on the roll of eminent saints, even in the orthodox Roman Catholic Church.

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

### *THE SCHOOL OF AFRICA AND AIONIOS.*

WE have considered the issues of the doctrine of Origen as to universal restoration, as taught in the two schools of Alexandria and Cesarea ; and also the issues of the doctrine of Theodore of Mopsuestia, as taught in the schools of Antioch and Edessa. We have also considered the doctrine of the annihilation of the wicked as taught in the school of Asia Minor. We now come to the last of the six schools which we have enumerated, the school of Northern Africa. This school lies to the west of Alexandria, and is composed of a series of teachers without a central location or buildings. Tertullian stands first in the series, and is followed by Cyprian, Minucius Felix, and Augustine.

#### CHARACTERISTICS.

The most striking characteristics of this school are three : the use of the Latin language instead of the Greek, in which Christianity was first promulgated ; an exemption from the influence of Origen, who wrote in Greek ; and the fact that their theology was developed by them under the influence of the great system of Roman law, to which they had access in the Latin language.

Maine, in his history of ancient law, has not hesitated to say that the difference between Eastern and Western theology is accounted for by the fact that, in passing from

the East to the West, theological speculation had passed from a region of Greek metaphysics to a climate of Roman law. The highest energies of the Roman mind had been employed in developing their wonderful system of law.

#### LATIN THEOLOGY AND CALVINISM.

Hence in this school were laid the foundations of that Latin legal and anthropological theology which through Augustine gained such ascendancy in Europe, and gave rise to Calvinism and the systems which have reacted from it. The fact that it was a legal school, and that it took a strong, deep hold of the question of human depravity and regeneration, gave it peculiar elements of power.

If any one would obtain a full impression of all that is involved in these facts, let him read the exposition of orthodox theology by John of Damascus, and compare it with any Augustinian or Calvinistic system.

The metaphysical energies of the Greek mind developed themselves in the subtle questions raised by the doctrine of the Trinity and the person of Christ, and were so absorbed by these that they never entered into the great legal questions which were the staple of Western theology. In particular, they did not enter into any profound investigations as to law, penalty, atonement, pardon, and retribution. But, as we have seen, decidedly the most powerful minds adopted the doctrine of universal restoration, and those who did not adopt it entered into no controversy about it with those who did. In the African school all this was reversed. From the very beginning they took strong ground in favor of the doctrine of eternal punishment, as an essential part of a great system of law of which God was the centre.

## INVESTIGATION LIMITED.

And yet they did not enter into any extended investigation of its deep foundations in the character of God, or of man. They published no treatises on it, but as occasion called for it they assumed it as true on the authority of the Latin version of the Greek Testament, in which *aionios* is rendered *æternus*. There is no need of citing many passages in proof of this, inasmuch as it is conceded on all hands. Minucius Felix, quoted by Hagenbach, § 78, says, "The torments of the wicked will be extreme and endless." Cyprian, as quoted by him, says: "A burning hell and devouring punishment shall burn the condemned in living flames, nor can they ever find cessation or end to their torments. . . . They are preserved with their bodies for infinite mental torments and for suffering. . . . After this life there is no place for repentance, and no satisfaction for sin. Here life is lost or gained. Here eternal safety is gained, by the worship of God and works of faith ("Ad Demetriad.," pp. 195, 196).

## QUESTION AS TO AIONIOS.

It is also worthy of note that, although this is a Latin school, yet it was in this that the argument now so familiar, for eternal punishment, from the necessary meaning of the word *αιωνιος* (*aionios*), was first distinctly propounded by Augustine. It came to pass thus: Orosius, a Spanish presbyter, having a high respect for Augustine, visited him, about 413, to lay before him certain errors of Priscilian and Origen, with which he was troubled. Among these was the doctrine of universal restoration. Among other things, Orosius stated to Augustine that the Origenists affirmed that the word *aionios* did not denote an absolute eternity, but an indefinitely long duration.

## AUGUSTINE'S ARGUMENT.

In reply to this assertion, Augustine, in a letter to Orosius, informed him that although *αιων* (*aion*) could be applied to a limited age, as well as eternity, yet it was not so with *aionios*, since the Greeks applied this word only to things without end. But happening to think that in the Old Testament it was applied to the covenant and observances of the Mosaic economy, he was rather perplexed, and suggested that the things typified by the Mosaic dispensation were eternal, and for this reason the types might be spoken of as eternal; as if a type was not in its very idea temporal. Not resting quietly on this ground, he at length resorts to the idea that absolute eternity is taught in the words of our Lord, "Their worm dieth not, and their fire is not quenched." He resorts, also, to the argument that, as an absolute eternity is involved in the *aionian* life proclaimed by Christ, so an absolute eternity is involved in the anti-thetic *aionian* punishment. This is also the substance of his argument in his "City of God" (book xxi., 23), and in his "Manual of Theology" (Enchiridion), ch. cxii. The great influence of Augustine gave currency to these views in the Western Church.

## UNIVERSAL RESTORATION NOT A HERESY.

But it deserves notice that he does not at that time speak of the doctrine of universal restoration as a heresy condemned by the Church. The doctrine of the salvation of the devil he speaks of as already condemned (book xxi., 17), and heretical, and he argues against the doctrine of universal restoration, that its principles tend to the restoration of the devil, a doctrine condemned by the Church. In the controversies in Palestine during the fifth and sixth centuries, this tendency was realized more and more, until

*the doctrine of universal restoration was gradually & progressively*

at length, when the opposers of the Origenists called in Justinian to plead and defend their cause, the doctrine of the restoration of the human race was condemned, as well as the restoration of the devil.

## JUSTINIAN'S LETTER.

The letter of Justinian to Mennas, the Patriarch of Constantinople, is an interesting letter, as developing what the enemies of Origen regarded as his greatest errors. It is also important as a specimen of imperial reasoning, designed as a guide for ecclesiastical legislation. The argument of the emperor against the doctrine of universal restoration is in substance the same with that of Augustine. He does not, however, venture with Augustine to say that *aionios* is applied by the Greeks only to that which has no end, but he argues that the punishment must be endless because the life is; and at the end of his argument, as we have previously said, he exchanges *aionios* for an unambiguous word, to denote absolute endlessness of punishment, and qualifies it by the same word to denote eternal life.

But Justinian understood Greek. On the other hand, Augustine bases his argument solely on the assumption that *aionios* always means endless. We see from these statements how true was the confession of Augustine that he knew little or nothing of Greek. He says, "I am not so accustomed to the Greek language that I am at all competent to read and understand books on such subjects" ("De Trinitate," iii., Proem); and again, "I have learned very little of the Greek language, and almost nothing" ("Contra literas Petilian," I., ii., c. 38, written in 400). For these extracts Dr. Schaff is my authority.

Hence we need not be surprised that Augustine treats *aionios* as if it had the one simple sense *endless*. He did



not seem to be aware that *aion* had many senses, and that therefore the adjective *aionios*, based on it, might also have many senses. He did not seem to be aware that it might mean pertaining to or existing in the coming age or world, as shown by Dr. Tayler Lewis, or that it could mean occurring at the opening of an age, as is shown by Herodian (iii., 8, 18), who calls the *secular* games celebrated at the close of one period and the beginning of another *aionian* games. He did not know that the word could mean having the characteristics of an age, or lasting through an age, or that, taking *aion* to denote a spirit, it could mean spiritual.

Our English word *age* has no adjective that can represent *aionios* in its range of meanings, and hence to translate it properly we are obliged to resort to periphrases.

There may be no doubt cases in which it can imply endlessness. If it relates to an age that is by concession endless, or if it relates to God as the God of *all* ages, and as therefore the *aionian* God—in such cases it implies the idea endless, but not from its own proper force, but from the age or ages to which it refers. But to assert, as Augustine did, that it means endless in all cases and of necessity, is possible only to one who is ignorant of the meaning of *aion* and the usages of *aionios*, in the Greek language.

If Augustine had thoroughly studied the usages of the Greek language as to *aion* and *aionios*, and had compared them with those of the same words when transferred into the Latin language, he would have found a very striking and instructive coincidence between them. The Greek *αιων* was thus transferred. How was the transfer effected? Thus: It has a digamma after *ai*, which is equivalent to our *v*. This appears in the Latin word, and by the change of the diphthong *ai* into *æ*, and *ων* into *um*, as was usual in

such cases, *αιον* was transferred into Latin as *ævum*; but the word in both cases is essentially the same. How, then, is *ævum* used in Latin? Augustine would have found that it is not used to denote eternity, but life, lifetime, time, age, period, and the men of an age or period, just as *αιον* is in Greek. I am aware that some lexicographers, among whom is Andrews, under the influence of Aristotle's derivation of *αιον*, wrongly translated, introduce, as the first and original sense, *eternity*. But of this they give only a few alleged instances, and these are cases where the word means *time*, and an adjective is expressed or understood which gives it universality. Thus, Horace, "Odes," iii., 11, 35, 36, eloquently says of Hypermnestra, the only daughter of Danaus who refused to murder her husband on the bridal night, after promising to do so, that she was

"Splendide mendax, et in *omne* virgo  
Nobilis *ævum* ;"

that is, "a virgin gloriously false to her promise, and illustrious to *every age*." This implies eternity, though the word *age* does not mean it of its own force.

The four cases given by Andrews in his *Lexicon* are easily explained thus: And the great river of usage is at war with the idea of eternity, and shows that it could not have been the original and primitive sense. Facciolatus, also, than whom there is no higher authority, says that *in ævum* is the same as *in omne ævum*, that is, for *every age*, for *all time*, and thus sustains the position assumed by me.

Take, now, another word, based on this. From *ævum* was formed *ævitas*, and by syncope this became *ætās*. What, now, does *ætās* denote? It is not even pretended that it ever means eternity. It denotes, like *aion*, life, the lifetime of man, an age, a space of time, time, the men

of an age. These senses are abundantly illustrated by Andrews in his "Latin Lexicon."

Take, now, another case. From the Latin *ævum* was formed the adjective *æviternus*, synonymous with *aionios*. This, by syncope of the syllable *vi*, became *æternus*, and was used in the Latin version of the words of Christ, as an equivalent to *aionios*. From this, too, comes our word *eternal*, which therefore has its roots in *aion*.

What, now, are the facts as to the Latin usage of the word *æternus*? I answer, in popular usage, it very rarely denotes endlessness. I have examined its usages in Virgil, of which there are at least twenty-six, and in other authors, and will state some facts. It means, frequently, *during life*. Thus, in Plautus, "Captivi," iv., 1-13, "I hope that, because of this message, I shall obtain *eternal* food" (*æternum cibum*). He did. His king was restored, and he had abundant food *for life*, not for eternity. Again (Most. i., 3, 37, 38). A friend says to a confiding young girl, enticed by a deceitful lover: "You are a fool to think that he will be an *eternal* friend to you" (that is, a friend *for life*); "I warn you that, by reason of increasing age and satiety, he will desert you."

Again ("Captivi," iv., 2, 117), "I will give you *eternal* food, if you speak the truth." In this case, food for *eternity* was out of the question. Food *for life* was the meaning. Hence we see clearly that the meaning *life*, in *aion*, still lived in the Latin *æternus*.

In view of these cases, Facciolatus, in his great "Lexicon," says, "It is *very frequently* used to denote what endures for life."

A striking instance occurs in Cicero ("Catiline," iv., 5), in the debate on the punishment of Lentulus, an associate of Catiline. In that, Cicero speaks thus of the opinion of

Cæsar, that he should be confined for life, "That very mild and merciful man does not hesitate to consign P. Lentulus to *eternal* darkness and chains." Cæsar had just disavowed a belief in a future life, in the hearing of Cicero. All that *eternal* so used can mean, is, *for life*.

Ovid says ("Trist.," v., 2, 15), "Telephus, wasted by an *eternal* disease, would have died, if the right hand that wounded him had not brought a cure." Telephus was wounded by Achilles, and cured by him by the rust of the wounding spear.

Virgil ("Georgics," ii., 400) says, "The soil must *eternally* be pulverized by cross-ploughing," i. e., this must be a fixed and stated usage in agriculture. Of Cerberus, vi., 401, he says that "he is *eternally* barking." He speaks of *eternal* leagues between leaders, or between nations, and of the *eternal* fires of Vesta. To Camilla he ascribes an "*eternal* love of weapons and of virginity," that is, a love for life. He comes nearest to an absolute eternity in speaking of the immortality of Juturna ("Æneid," xii., 879), and the power of the gods ("Æneid," i., 2, 30; x. 18). But here the things spoken of impart this sense to the word. Horace ("Ep.," i., 10, 41), says of one who cannot live without riches, and fears poverty as the greatest evil, "He will be an *eternal* slave because he does not know how to live on a little." Here the sense is a slave for life. Pliny, xiii., 5, 11, speaks of the "eternity of the wood of the cedar-tree."

Virgil ("Æneid," ii., 154) calls the sun, moon, and stars *eternal* fires. So, by an inspired writer, the same worlds are called *eternal*. And yet both writers believed that they would pass away and be dissolved.

Such cases represent the popular use of the word. But in Cicero's philosophical writings, when he is under the influence of the Greek philosophers, he introduces the phil-

osophical sense of an absolute eternity which they originated in later ages.

Still another word used in translating *aion* in the Latin version deserves notice.

*Seculum* is used by Jerome in translating the reduplications of *αιων*, *aions* of *aions*, which our version renders forever and ever; that is, truly translated, for ages of ages. In the book of Revelation this expression occurs fourteen times. What, now, is the rendering of Jerome? He in every instance renders it "*secula seculorum*." What, now, is the sense of *seculum* in Latin? Does it ever mean eternity?

No. It means a race or generation of animals or of men; then a lifetime; then an age; then the men of an age; then an indefinite period—of marked characteristics, as "in our age."

Thus the expression *in secula seculorum* may be rendered for generations of generations, or for ages of ages.

Indeed, our expression forever and ever, traced to its original sense, means "for an age and an age." For our word *ever* is, in fact, the old Greek word *aion*, or the Latin *ævum*, modified by transmission to our times. (See Webster's "Dictionary.") To our expression "forever and ever" we attach the idea of endlessness, by usage and habit. But, in fact, as a translation of the Bible, it means no more than the Greek for *aions* of *aions*, or the Latin for *secula* of *secula*, or the English for ages of ages. If Augustine had fully understood the Greek usages of *aion* and *aionios*, and the Latin usages of *ævum*, *ætas*, *æternus*, and *seculum*, he would have placed no stress on *aion*, or *aionios*, or *æternus*, as proving endless punishment.

But it so happened that the Latin school of Augustine, in Africa, in which the leading writers were not Greek

scholars, was mainly instrumental in establishing the doctrine of endless punishment on this false basis. Even if the doctrine were true, the basis on which they placed it was false.

## CHAPTER XXIX.

### *OTHER NAMES.*

Thus far I have followed the great current of events, and spoken of the men who were most influential in directing it. I have considered the great theological schools of the early centuries, and made prominent the names of those who chiefly gave character to them, as Irenæus, Origen, Diodorus of Tarsus, Theodore of Mopsuestia, and Augustine. I have spoken of councils and of men prominent in them, as Gregory of Nyssa.

But there are others of the fathers, who believed in universal restoration, whose names deserve mention in a history of opinions.

### CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA.

Among these is Clement of Alexandria, who preceded Origen as the president of the Catechetical School of Alexandria. He was the teacher of Origen, and imparted to him those principles which imply universal restoration. These Origen more fully developed in his system of theology. Clement taught that all punishment is remedial, and that God uses means to reform and purify man after death. In proof of this, he appeals to the statement of Peter that Christ went and preached to the spirits in prison, which almost all the fathers understood to be a literal fact. He also taught that these means will be effectual. As quoted by Neander, he says: "If in this life there are so many

ways of purification and repentance, how much more should there be after death ! The purification of souls when separated from the body will be easier. We can set no limits to the agency of the Redeemer ; to redeem, to rescue, to discipline, is his work ; and so will he continue to operate after life." That he held that thus *all* will be saved is conceded by other eminent orthodox scholars. Daille says : "Clement was of the same opinion as his scholar Origen, who everywhere teaches that all the punishments of those in hell are purgatorial ; that they are not endless, but will at length cease, when the damned are sufficiently purified in the fire."

Archbishop Potter, the learned editor of the works of Clement, regards him as teaching not only the salvation of all men, but even of the devil himself, inasmuch as "he taught that the devil can repent, and even the most heinous sins are purged away by punishments after death." The testimony of these two scholars is taken from Ballou's "History of Ancient Universalism," page 52. It is given there more fully.

Though Clement generally goes no further than to state principles from which universal restoration results, yet in one or two passages he explicitly declares the salvation of all men.

Of him Dr. Schaff says : "He sprang either from Athens or from Alexandria, and was brought up in heathenism. He was versed in all the branches of Hellenic literature, and in all the existing systems of philosophy ; but in these he found nothing to satisfy his thirst for truth. In his adult years, therefore, he embraced the Christian religion, and by long journeys east and west he sought the most distinguished teachers, "who preserved the tradition of pure, saving doctrine, and implanted that genuine apostolic



seed in the hearts of their pupils. . . . In A. D. 189 he succeeded Pantænus as president of the Catechetical School of Alexandria. Here he labored benignly some twelve years for the conversion of heathens and the education of the Christians" (vol. i., pp. 498, 499).

He says also: "Clement was the father of the Alexandrian Christian philosophy. He united thorough Biblical and Hellenic learning with genius and speculative thought. He rose, in many points, far above the prejudices of his age, to more free and spiritual views."

He complains, however, that his system, as a whole, was not logical and consistent and purely Christian, but introduced Stoic, Platonic, and Philonic ingredients, not in harmony with Christianity. In this, however, he was not peculiar. No eminent father, and very few, if any, modern orthodox divines, can be mentioned who have not introduced into their systems the elements of some foreign philosophy, or who are not involved in some form of self-contradiction.

#### DIDYMUS OF ALEXANDRIA.

This great man was born in the year 309. He became eminent against great discouragements. In the fourth year of his age he entirely lost his sight. Yet, as Dr. Schaff says, "by extraordinary industry he gained comprehensive and thorough knowledge in philosophy, rhetoric, and mathematics." He became a devoted Christian, and for nearly sixty years labored as president of the Theological School of Alexandria. He was, as Dr. Schaff says, "a faithful follower of Origen." Of his belief in universal restoration, evidence may be found in his work on the Trinity (iii., 10), and in his notes on 1 Peter iii., 22, and i., 12. Here he teaches the salvation of sinning angels, and of all rational beings. The passages are too long to quote.

There would be more evidence had not his works been expurgated or destroyed, after his condemnation as a universalist, by the General Council of Constantinople. Jerome, Rufinus, and Photius regarded him as undeniably such.

Such being his character and his theology, how was he regarded by the orthodox men of his age? Dr. Schaff shall reply. He says: "Athanasius nominated him teacher in the Theological School. Even men like Jerome, Rufinus, Palladius, and Isidore, sat at his feet with admiration" (ii., 922).

## JEROME.

It may cause surprise in many minds to hear that Jerome, the most learned of all the fathers, unless we except Origen, was also a universal restorationist. Yet he has expressly taught that doctrine. On Gal. v. 22, speaking of joy as a fruit of the Spirit, he says: "It should be considered that after love comes joy. For he who loves any one always rejoices in his felicity. And if he shall see him deceived by any error, or to have fallen on the slippery places of sins, he will grieve indeed, and hasten to rescue him. But he will not be able to turn his joy into sorrow, knowing that no rational creature before God will perish forever." Gieseler quotes this last sentence (vol. i., p. 212) as decided proof that Jerome held to the salvation of all, and that belief in the doctrine was general in the West. Nor is this the only passage in which Jerome advances these views.

On Eph. iv. 13 he says: "The question should arise, Who those are of whom he says that they *all* shall come in the unity of the faith? Does he mean all men, or all the saints, or all rational beings? He appears to me to be speaking of *all men*." Other passages might be quoted in

which these views are more fully developed. To be sure, in another place in this epistle he rejects as heretical the idea that all rational creatures shall be changed into angels, and that, at the restitution of the world, every creature shall become just what he was when first created. This he understood as implying that Satan would be restored to his old position as head of the universe. But these ideas are not essential to the system of universal restoration. And his general views as to universal salvation, just stated, he has nowhere retracted.

On Eph. iv. 10 he says: "The Son of God therefore descended into the lower parts of the earth, and ascended above all heavens, that he might not only fulfill the law and prophets, but also other secret dispensations which he alone understands with the Father. For we cannot understand how the blood of Christ benefited the angels, and those who were in the infernal regions (*in inferno*), and yet we cannot but know that it did benefit them. He descended to those in the infernal regions (*inferos*), and ascended to heaven that he might fill those who were in those regions, according as they were able to receive him. From which we should learn that, before Christ descended and ascended, *all* were empty and needed his fullness."

On Gal. iv. 1 he says "that heir who is a child who in nothing differs from a servant though he be Lord of all, but is under tutors and governors until the time fixed by his father, signifies *the whole human race*, even to the coming of Christ, and, that I may express myself more fully, even to the consummation of the world. For as all in Adam though not yet born die, so even all those who were born before the coming of Christ are made alive. And so it comes to pass that we were servants under the law in our fathers, and they shall be saved by grace in

their sons. The coming of Christ is regarded as designed for the perfection of *the human race*. For as soon as he has come and we all have grown up to a perfect man the tutor and schoolmaster depart." This agrees with what he says on Eph iv. 13, that *all men* are to come into the unity of the faith.

On Eph. iv. 4, "one hope of your calling," he says:

"The question is raised how there is one hope of our calling when with the Father are different mansions. To which we reply that the one hope of our calling is the kingdom of heaven, which is as it were one house of God the Father, and that in this house are various mansions, for there is one glory of the sun, another of the moon, another of the stars, or certainly the following idea is indicated more accurately and acutely, that, in the end and consummation of the universe, all things are to be restored into their original harmonious state, and we all shall be made one body and be united once more into a perfect man, and the prayer of our Saviour shall be fulfilled, that all may be one" (John xvii. 21).

These passages may be the ones referred to by Neander when he says that "from the want of a logical systematizing mind, Jerome, in making use of Origen in his Biblical commentaries, adopted several of his expositions which were of such a kind as to agree neither with his own other views of the faith, nor with the dominant Church, without deeming it necessary to utter a word of warning, until his attention had been directed by others to this opposition of views."

But, even then, he did not retract these views, but only other views that Origen did not teach, namely, that all rational creatures shall be changed into angels, and that at the restitution of all things each being shall be what he was at first, e. g., Satan the head of the created universe.

The truth probably is that Jerome, so far as these passages were concerned, always continued to believe with Origen. His comment on Gal. v. 22, which has been quoted, clearly intimates it. But he was afraid of Epiphanius and sensitive as to his reputation for orthodoxy. He therefore repudiated certain things falsely charged by Epiphanius on Origen, to satisfy him, and left the passages exhibiting his real sentiments unaltered.

I think that Dr. Ballou is correct also in supposing (p. 229) that in finally resorting to a modified form of future eternal punishment for the devil and his angels, and persistent assailants of Christianity, and malignant blasphemers, leaving all others to be saved by purgation through suffering, temporary, but long-continued if necessary, he was simply interposing a shield against his assailants, while notwithstanding in his heart he believed with Origen. There is nothing in his theory of morals, or in his actual course in controversies, to forbid this view. Of him Dr. Schaff says: "With all his gifts, he was not free from faults, as glaring as his virtues are shining, which disturb our due esteem and admiration. He lacked depth of mind and character, *delicate sense of truth*, and firm and strong convictions. He allowed himself inconsistencies of every kind, especially in his treatment of Origen, and, through solicitude for his own reputation for orthodoxy, he was unjust to that great teacher to whom he owed so much" (ii., 971).

#### EUSEBIUS.

Probably it will surprise many more to hear that the learned Eusebius, the father of ecclesiastical history, was a universal restorationist. But it is not strange. He was an admirer of Origen, and taught with him in the seminary at Cesarea, and with Pamphilus published a labored

defense of him in six books, five of which have been unfortunately lost; yet Dr. Ballou dares not claim him, and thinks that we cannot decide what his opinions were.

But Eusebius clearly sets them forth, "De Ecc. Theol." (Migne vi., p. 1030). There, speaking on 1 Cor. xv. 28, he says, in effect, that "if the subjection of the Son to the Father means union with him, then the subjection of *all* to the Son means union with him." He then thus proceeds: "As the apostle when he said all shall be subjected to the Son did not mean union of essence, but obedience flowing from free-will, together with the honor and glory which all give him as the Saviour, and King of all, in the same way his subjection to the Father means nothing else than the glory, and honor, and veneration, and exaltation, and voluntary subjection, which he is to give to God the Father, when he has made *all* worthy of his paternal Godhead. For, so long as they are not worthy of this, he, anticipating the future as a common Saviour of all, administers a kingdom restorative of the imperfect and curative of those who need healing."

The nerve of the argument of Origen, on the same passage, is this: As the same word is used to denote the voluntary subjection of the Son to the Father, that is used to denote the subjection of all things to Christ, it follows that this subjection to Christ is voluntary and not forced. Nor is the word adapted to express a forced subjection. Hence, all will be finally brought to a voluntary subjection to Christ. Eusebius reasons on essentially the same principle. If the subjection of the Son to the Father means voluntary union with him, then the subjection of all to the Son implies voluntary union with him, and if so all will be ultimately restored from sin to holiness, by him, as he more fully states.

He states (p. 1031) the same principle and its results in a still more striking manner: "Christ is to subject all things to himself. We ought to conceive of this as such a salutary subjection as that by which the Son will be subjected to him, who subjects *all* to him. We ought to believe that he will effect a subjection ineffable, indescribable, and befitting him alone, when he shall present to God, even the Father, those subjected to himself, collecting them like a heavenly choir ascribing to him glory and honor and salvation and majesty, who is the source and cause of all good things."

## THEODORET.

This illustrious man was Bishop of Cyprus, A. D. 423-447, and, as Dr. Schaff says (vol. ii., § 162), "was formed upon the writings of Diodorus of Tarsus and Theodore of Mopsuestia," those great teachers of universal restoration. He also published a defense of them, which is lost. It is not wonderful, then, that he should adopt their views. That he did may be seen in his comment on the celebrated passage 1 Cor. xv. 28:

"That God may be all in all. Now, by nature, God is everywhere, for he has a nature that cannot be circumscribed, and in him we live and move and have our being, as says the divine apostle. But he is not in all by complacency. For he is pleased with those who fear him and hope in his mercy. And yet, even in these, he is not all. For no one is free from pollution (Ps. cxlii. 2, and cxxx. 3). But in the future life, corruption ceasing, and immortality being conferred, the passions have no place, and these being removed, no kind of sin is committed. So from that time God is all in all, when *all* freed from sin and turned to him shall have no inclination to evil."

We see here the view of Theodore of Mopsuestia as to the two states of man. In the first he sins, and learns the evil of sin. In the second he is raised above it, perfected, and established. In his tenth oration on "Providence" he twice refers to the cessation of the passions in a future state, and repeatedly extends the saving effects of the works of Christ to the whole human race. In his comments on Ephesians i. 10 and Hebrews ii. 9, are similar views. On Ephesians i. 10, he extends salvation and joy to the whole creation. In the Nestorian controversies, Theodoret suffered much persecution. His "Ecclesiastical History," in the judgment of Dr. Schaff, is the most valuable continuation of that of Eusebius. He also wrote commentaries and theological works. As a bishop, he had no ambition but to perform the duties of his office irreproachably, and especially to take care of the poor. He did not aim to accumulate wealth. He purchased books, but, beyond this, he devoted the revenues of his see to the public good.

## AMBROSIASTER.

This is the name of an author who wrote commentaries on the epistles of Paul, of decided merit, and which are published in the works of Ambrose. His real name is unknown. Hence he derives his name from Ambrose. In the commentary on 1 Cor. xv. 28, he says: "This is implied in the Son's subjecting himself to the Father; this is involved in God's being all in all; namely, when every creature learns that Christ is their head, and that God the Father is the head of Christ. Then God the Father is all in all. This implies that every creature thinks one and the same thing, so that every tongue of celestials, terrestrials, and infernals, shall confess God as the great one from whom all things are derived." These views he frequently repeats.



As to Ambrose himself he appears to have adopted the limited doctrine of eternal punishment put forth by Jerome. The devil and his angels, blasphemers, and stubborn infidels, shall be punished forever. The rest, in various ways and at various times, shall be purged and saved.

MACRINA.

This beautiful and noble woman was the sister of Gregory of Nyssa and Basil the Great. She was engaged to be married to one whom she tenderly loved, and, as he died before their marriage, she lived, from fidelity to him, a single life, in religious retirement. She exercised a great and benign influence on her brothers, and Gregory of Nyssa, in one of his works, disclosed his system on final restoration, in which she fully agreed with him, through her. He introduces her as uttering his views, which were also her own. The prayer that she uttered in death has been handed down, and is heart-thrilling and sublime. Her Christian character was eminent, and her influence great, and she was canonized as a saint.

PAMPHILUS.

This learned and eminent man was a presbyter of Caesarea in Palestine. He was wealthy, and devoted his means to founding a theological school in Caesarea, in which Origen taught after he left Alexandria. He also established a valuable library there, and copied for it, with his own hand, the works of Origen, of whom he was an ardent admirer and follower. He wrote a defense of him in connection with Eusebius, his devoted friend. To this Eusebius added a sixth book. Of this work only the first volume is extant. So ardent was the love of Eusebius for Pamphilus that he added his name to his own, Eusebius

Pamphilus. There is no reason to doubt that he believed in the doctrine of universal restoration, although so large a portion of his writings have perished that we cannot prove it by extracts.

## NAMES LESS KNOWN.

In addition to those thus far characterized, there are two classes who deserve notice: one, of those who were believers in universal restoration, though not extensively known as such; the other, of those who in all probability were such. It will not be possible to give a detailed account of these two classes. But to complete the outline of the state of that system, and to give the shades of the picture, their names should be mentioned.

In the first class come Titus, Bishop of Bostra, who was eminent from 360 to 370, and probably earlier; Ambrosius, a convert of Origen in Alexandria, who aided him by his wealth to compose his works, and was his intimate friend; Evagrius Ponticus, Archdeacon of Constantinople, and anathematized by the Fifth General Council for having taught universal restoration; F. M. Victorinus, a converted rhetorician of Rome, 350 to 370 (he agreed with Gregory of Nyssa—he also defended the Trinity); Domitian, Bishop of Galatia, who briefly but powerfully defended Origen and universal restoration.

In the second class come the intimate friends, scholars, and admirers of Origen, who have not left on record a full expression of their views. In this class come the celebrated Gregory Thaumaturgus, Bishop of Neocesarea, a convert and a scholar of Origen, and his panegyrist, his brother, Athenodorus, who was also a student under Origen, and afterward a bishop in Pontus; Alexander, Bishop of Jerusalem; Heraclas, Origen's convert, and assistant and successor in the school of Alexandria, and Bishop of Alex-

andria; Firmilian, Bishop of Cesarea, a scholar of Origen, who afterward visited him in Palestine, and invited him into his own province to preach and teach; Palladius, a Bishop of Asia Minor; and John, Bishop of Jerusalem, who defended Origen against Epiphanius. Because positive evidence cannot be obtained in written declarations, these are not stated decidedly to be universalists; and yet in every case moral and circumstantial evidence leaves no rational doubt of the fact.

## CHAPTER XXX.

### *ESOTERIC BELIEVERS.*

It was very common with pagan philosophers to hold that certain doctrines were needful for the masses, though not absolutely true. In such cases the absolute truth was held as an esoteric doctrine, and the other proclaimed to the people. The fathers of the Christian Church did not escape the infection of this leprosy of pious fraud. In the judgment of Neander, this was true of a father no less eminent and celebrated than the great Chrysostom.

### CHRYSOSTOM.

The facts concerning this eminent man are, that he was a scholar of Diodore of Tarsus for six years, and during that time Theodore of Mopsuestia was his fellow-student. Both of these were decided advocates of universal restoration. Of course, Chrysostom must have understood their views of 1 Cor. xv. 38, the corner-stone of that system. In expounding this passage, what course does Chrysostom take? He simply says that the doctrine of universal restoration has been inferred from that passage, makes a striking statement of the result, and says nothing to refute the opinion. From this, Neander infers that he believed it, since if he had held it to be erroneous he would have contradicted it ("History of Dogmas," vol. ii., p. 415). Elsewhere Neander says that in his field of labor he felt that the doctrine of eternal punishment was necessary to alarm

the worldly and deter them from sin, and so he preached it to the multitude ("Ch. History," vol. ii., p. 676, Torrey's translation).

Again, in commenting on Phil. ii. 10, 11, "that at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow," he asks: "What does this mean of things in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth? It means the whole world, and angels, and men, and demons. Or it signifies both the holy and sinners." He, of course, knew the use made of this text, that bowing the knee involves true worship in the good, and that it should not be taken in two senses, as it would be if it were said to mean only a forced and hypocritical pretense of worship on the part of sinners. If he thought this argument invalid, why did he give such an answer as he did, and not expose the false inference derived from it? Neander would say, as before, esoterically he believed that the inference was valid, but that the other view was needed by the masses, to deter them from sin by fear.

#### GREGORY NAZIANZEN.

This distinguished father, Neander puts in the same class. He says: "Gregory Nazianzen did not venture to express his own doctrine so openly, but allows it sometimes to escape when he is speaking of eternal punishment" ("History of Christian Dogmas," vol. ii., pp. 414, 415, London, 1866). Hagenbach takes a similar view (vol. i., § 142, note 6), but with less decision. Gregory, referring to the fire that Christ came to kindle on earth, calls it a purifying fire. But he then goes on to describe another fire as penal, as the fire of Sodom, or that prepared for the devil, or the fire that is never quenched, but is everlasting, for the punishment of wicked men, "unless in this case also we may understand the fire more moderately as puri-

fyng, which is more benevolent and humane, and more worthy of God, who punishes" (Benedictine Ed., Orat. xl., p. 721, § 6). In this last flash of feeling, there is a revelation of his esoteric view. Yet he thought it best often to preach the other. Even Origen thought that it was sometimes best to take this course, as he expressly says.

ATHANASIUS.

By his acts, this great man has indicated that either he believed in universal restoration, or that he regarded it as not a dangerous error. He nominated, as I have said, Didymus the Blind, a decided follower of Origen, as president of the Catechetical School at Alexandria, where he taught for sixty years, while even men like Jerome, Rufinus, Palladius, and Isidore, sat at his feet with admiration.

Athanasius, too, was a student and admirer of the works of Origen, and defended him as orthodox, and quoted him as authority in controversies.

BASIL THE GREAT.

This eminent man was a brother of Gregory of Nyssa, and of the saintly Macrina, of whom I have spoken. They lived in love and in peace. What were Basil's inward views of the opinions of such a brother and such a sister? Did he make any effort to turn them from dangerous error? Or, had he, too, an esoteric view, which enabled him to regard their views without distress, and even with complacency? Certainly some passages in his writings imply it. And yet, in other cases, he proclaims endless punishment, to warn and arouse delaying sinners.

It is not necessary to pursue this view further. But it is very important, as explaining the great fact to which I have already adverted, that not one of the great fathers

has ever made an elaborate argument for future eternal punishment, or against universal restoration as a dangerous error. Augustine is nearest to an exception; but he is superficial and limited in his range of thought.

We cannot fully understand such a proclamation of future endless punishment as has been described, while it was not believed, until we consider the influence of Plato on the age. He not only justified, but enjoined the use of, falsehood for the masses in his "Republic." He describes a fiction as to the origin of the different classes of the republic which is to be taught from childhood. Socrates is introduced as saying, "It is indispensable that this fiction should be circulated and accredited, as the fundamental, consecrated, unquestioned creed of the whole city, from which the feeling of harmony and brotherhood among the citizens springs" (Grote's "Plato," vol. iii., pp. 56, 57). Such principles, as a leprosy, had corrupted the whole community, and especially the leaders. In the Roman Empire, pagan magistrates and priests appealed to retributions in Tartarus, of which they had no belief, to affect the masses. This does not excuse, but it explains, the preaching of eternal punishment by men who did not believe it.

This want of a high sensibility to veracity injured the early Church immeasurably, and all subsequent ages have suffered by it.

A vivid sensibility to truth is needed above all things in this age. The power of denominational interests or prejudices to affect the true statement of historical facts has been great. It should wholly cease, and every man should write as in the presence of God, who cannot be deceived, and who abhors all fraud and deceit.

## CHAPTER XXXI.

### *THE PERIOD BEFORE ORIGEN.*

It will be noticed that, as we took the era of the Maccabees as a point of vision before Christ, so we took the era of Origen, A. D. 230, for the same purpose after Christ. But from this point of vision we have not as yet surveyed the early ages, as we proposed to do. True, in our survey of theological schools, we noticed the school of John in Asia Minor, and Irenæus, its representative. We also fully considered Justin Martyr, as coinciding with him in the doctrine of the annihilation of the wicked. But of the other writers of this period no adequate notice has as yet been taken. In particular, those who are called the Apostolic Fathers have not been formally considered. In this I have departed from the usual course, which has been to attempt to present some recorded, established, and settled system of belief as existing in immediate connection with the apostolic age. I mentioned four conflicting systems in the interest of which this field of history has been surveyed, and declined to enter into the conflict, for want of adequate materials, and because I was sure that no definite established doctrine could be found on the main points now in controversy. But now, from our point of vision, I propose to survey that field.

### HISTORIC CHARACTER OF THE PERIOD.

But before we attempt to make positive statements in the history of doctrine, it is well for us to form a clear



conception of the historical character of this period. It is set forth in a striking manner by Stanley in his "Eastern Church," p. 36. In answer to the question, How was the transition effected from the age of the apostles to the age of the fathers? he says: "No other change equally momentous has ever since affected the fortunes of Christianity, yet none has ever been so silent and so secret. The stream in that most critical moment of its passage from the everlasting hills to the plain below is lost to our view at the very point where we are most anxious to watch it; we may hear its struggles under the overarching rocks; we may catch its spray on the boughs that overlap its course; but the torrent we see not, or see only by imperfect glimpses. It is not so much a period for ecclesiastical history as for ecclesiastical controversy and conjecture. A fragment here, an allegory there; romances of unknown authorship; a handful of letters, of which the genuineness of every portion is contested inch by inch; the summary examination of a Roman magistrate; the pleadings of two or three Christian apologists; customs and opinions in the very act of change; last, but not least, the faded paintings, the broken sculptures, the rude epitaphs, in the darkness of the catacombs, these are the scanty though attractive materials out of which the likeness of the early Church must be reproduced, as it was working its way." Though the genuine works of two Apostolic Fathers and others under their name are not particularly specified here, yet, as a general view of the scanty historical materials of the age, it is a true picture. We have no historian till Eusebius, A. D. 330. This state of things is, moreover, a warning against all pretentious attempts to make out histories of doctrines for which the materials do not exist.

The fundamental thing in history is to criticise thor-

oughly the original sources of evidence. The most recent and thorough critical English work, as to the Apostolical Fathers and other ante-Nicene writers, is that of James Donaldson, entitled "A Critical History of Christian Literature and Doctrine from the Death of the Apostles to the Nicene Council" (London, 1866). In this and in the work of Hefele on the Apostolical Fathers will be found a thorough discussion of the written sources of authoritative history on this early period.

#### WRITERS OF THE PERIOD.

Let us now briefly survey the writers of the period before Origen, as was originally proposed, with some care.

These writers may be divided into two classes. In the first are those generally called the Apostolic Fathers. In the second are those generally known as the Apologists. The idea of an Apostolic Father is one who was alive in the days of the apostles, and had intercourse with them, or was even one of their disciples. Of these the names of six are given: Barnabas, the companion and fellow-laborer of Paul; Clement, of Philippi (Phil. iv. 3), afterward regarded as Bishop of the Church of Rome; Hermas, saluted by Paul in Rom. xvi. 14; Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch; and Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna. These last two are not mentioned in the New Testament, but are stated in the martyrdom of Ignatius to have been fellow-disciples of John. Irenæus also testifies that Polycarp, whom he well knew, was a disciple of John.

#### THE APOLOGISTS.

The Apologists are those who undertook to plead the cause of the Christians in days of persecution under the emperors. They were generally converted philosophers,

and men of a higher grade of education than the Apostolic Fathers. Of these the works of some have perished. Those whose works have survived, and are available in our investigations, are Justin Martyr; Tatian, his disciple; Theophilus, Bishop of Antioch; and Athenagoras, said to be of Athens. To these may be added the letter to Diogenetus, and, in the Latin Church, Tertullian. Of Irenæus, the great opponent of the Gnostics, we have spoken; Justin, also, has been fully considered.

#### APOSTOLIC FATHERS—WHO?

If, now, the reputed five Apostolic Fathers were what they have been held to be, and if they had undertaken to give historical narratives of the course of events or general views of the Christian system, or discussions of particular doctrines, their writings would be of unspeakable value. But as a matter of fact two of the five, Barnabas and Hermas are not the persons spoken of in the New Testament, and who they are cannot be decided. The letters of another, Ignatius, and the narrative of his martyrdom, are distrusted by Neander as devoid of verisimilitude and unhistorical, or, at least, much interpolated. Donaldson, in his learned and critical work, decidedly transfers them to a later age, and, though many eminent scholars receive them, yet they cannot, without clearer evidence, be relied on as trustworthy documents of an Apostolic Father. What, then, have we left that is sure? Simply the first epistle of Clement, and that of Polycarp. These can stand the test of thorough criticism.

What is called the second Epistle of Clement, though often quoted, is decidedly spurious. It is probably the part of a later homily.

As to the Apologists, the works of those whose names

have been mentioned are genuine and reliable. But they do not profess to be either historical or doctrinal. They are vindications of Christians against slanderers and persecutors. Materials of history and of doctrine can be extracted from them, but these are incidental and not systematic.

## GENERAL VIEW.

Let us now proceed to inquire what light can be derived from the writers of these two classes on the subject of retribution.

In the first place, it may be said that until we come to the Apologists, and especially Justin Martyr, there is no reference at all to our Saviour's account of the judgment and the doom to *aionian* fire and *aionian* punishment. The contrast between them and Justin Martyr in this respect is very striking. He refers repeatedly to the words of Christ in both of his Apologies, and in his debate with Trypho, and all his language is colored by them. But in the letters of Clement and Polycarp they are not referred to at all, though they often speak of retribution. The same is true of the works under the name of Barnabas and Hermas, which were ancient, though not apostolic. It is also true of the letters of Ignatius, at whatever time and by whomsoever they were written.

It is true that in the account of the martyrdom of Polycarp the words of Christ are referred to. But of this the historical reliability has been thoroughly shaken by Donaldson. He proves that though the Church of Smyrna in all probability wrote an account of the martyrdom of Polycarp, yet by successive copyists various interpolations have been inserted in it. He then asks, "How do these interpolations affect the historical character of the work?" His reply is: "In our opinion they completely damage it. We have no

security for any one fact in it, because we have no means of eliminating what was written by the Church in Smyrna from what was fabricated by Pionios and other transcribers. . . . And we are confirmed in this when we see the various efforts made by Tillemont, Jortin, and others to reconcile the various statements or elicit the truth" (vol. i., p. 176). *See also Jortin, p. 218*

PARTICULAR AUTHORS—CLEMENT.

Let us now come to particular authors. What, then, can we learn from the letter of Clement to the Church of Corinth? It was written not as a theological treatise, but for a definite practical end, to secure the restoration of certain presbyters whom that church had unjustly deposed, and to heal the division thence resulting. He rebukes the spirit of those who had caused the schism, and warns them of coming retribution unless they repent and reform. But whence are all his examples of retribution and all threats of it taken? I answer, from the Old Testament. Hence, they do not refer to a future world. True, he speaks of the rewards of the good in a future life, after the resurrection, in glowing terms, but of the doom of the wicked hereafter he says nothing definite. Parts of his letter have been construed as proving the salvation of all. They prove only that the forgiving love of God is great and immeasurable, but not what it will finally effect. (*See* chapters xxi., xix., pp. 86, 82, Hefele).

POLYCARP.

The letter of Polycarp to the Church of Philippi is not doctrinal, but is a general exhortation to godliness, in all the relations of life. It speaks in general terms of the rewards of the righteous, and the punishment of those who do not believe in Christ. Of Christ he says, "He comes

as the judge of the living and the dead, and his blood God will require of those who do not believe in him" (chapter ii.). Of those who believe and live holy lives he says that he will raise them from the dead, and they shall reign with him (chapter v.). Of eternal punishment, or of restoration, or of annihilation, he says literally nothing. These, then, are the two genuine works of Apostolical Fathers, and this is all that they contain on the subject in question.

## BARNABAS.

Let us next come to Barnabas and Hermas, whose works are ancient (about A. D. 140), though not written by Apostolic Fathers. Barnabas, in chapter xviii. 21 (Hefele's edition), describes the two ways of light and of darkness. Of the way of darkness he says: "It is crooked and full of cursing; for it is the way of *aionian* death, with punishment, in which they that walk meet those things that *destroy* their own souls" (chapter xx.). Of him who chooses the side of sin he says: "He shall be *destroyed*, together with his works. For this cause there shall be both a resurrection and a retribution" (chapter xxi.).

Again he says, "The day is near in which all things shall be *destroyed* with the wicked one" (chapter xxi.). What he says may be understood of the annihilation of the wicked. But it may also be explained otherwise; for the nature of the destruction here spoken of he does not unfold; nor can we decide whether he believed in the final annihilation of the wicked after punishment or not. His views are not fully developed.

## HERMAS.

In the work of Hermas we find something more like a system, presented in the form of an allegory. The Church

in the form of a woman, and the angel of repentance in the form of a shepherd, present the characters of the allegory to Hermas. They represent the Church as the great end of God in all things, and set forth the formation of it by the building of a tower (Vis. iii. and Sim. ix.). In this tower Christians are stones. Those who enter the Church and prove unfit are represented as cast out, to remain out permanently, unless they are refitted to enter by repentance. The work is designed to warn and excite backsliding or apostatizing Christians. He sets forth about twenty classes of such, and says clearly that unless they repent and reform they will die forever; yet he teaches the possibility of repentance and delivery from punishment, even after this life, to some who do not enter the tower here. So he is understood by Rothe, Hefele, and the editors of the "Bib. Max. Patrum," and clearly with good reason. Other scholars deny it (*see* book i., Vis. iii., § 7, Hefele). Of the heathen, outside of the Church, he says little. The book is not addressed to them. He briefly says they are to be burned, like dry trees, for not recognizing and worshiping God (book iii., Sim. iv.). But he regards the guilt of sinners in the Church as greater than theirs, and deserving a twofold punishment. "These Christians who have known the Lord, and seen his wonderful works, if they live wickedly, shall be punished twofold, and shall die forever" (Sim. ix., 18, Hefele). But this is merely a restatement of our Lord's decision that the servant who knew not his lord's will and did it not shall be beaten with few stripes, while he who knew it and did it not shall be beaten with many stripes. Whether burning means annihilation Hermas does not say. The same burning is also assigned in the same place to sinners in the Church who do not repent. The language generally used to denote the state of the lost is that they never

repent, but die forever. There are also statements that life consists in holy action and emotion, and death in unholy action and passions. If we take this view of the import of his language, Hermas does not teach the annihilation of the wicked, but an eternity of sinful action and suffering to all who do not repent after death. But his views are not clearly and sharply developed. There had been no controversy.

## IGNATIUS.

We come now to the so-called letters of Ignatius. They say very little on the points at issue. The most decided expression is in the letter to the Ephesians. Of certain corrupt, false teachers, he says, "Such a one shall go into unquenchable fire, and in like manner all who hear him" (chapter xvi., Hefele). He also says of those who make schisms that they shall not inherit the kingdom of God. Of Christians he speaks as having true life and immortality in Christ. But he does not say positively that the wicked shall be annihilated. He may mean that they shall die in their sins forever; yet in some cases the idea of annihilation is suggested. The truth is, that he did not fully develop his views on this point, the same is true of all whom we have considered thus far. There had been no sharp controversy on the points now at issue, and therefore their statements are undeveloped and indefinite.

## JUSTIN MARTYR.

We come now to the Apologists. Of Justin Martyr we have formerly spoken as teaching the annihilation of the wicked.

In Athenagoras, Tatian, and Theophilus, there is much less found on the subject of retribution than in Justin Martyr.



## ATHENAGORAS.

Athenagoras, however, in his Apology, denies the annihilation of the wicked, and says that while the holy enjoy a better and heavenly life, the wicked shall pass a worse one in fire (chapter xxxi.). He states this to Aurelius to prove that the views of the Christians deterred them from an impure and sinful life. Of restoration he says nothing.

## THEOPHILUS.

Theophilus, in his treatise to Autolycus, in three instances applies *aionios* to denote the fire and the punishment of sinners. He says of Christians that they are taught to abstain from sins that they may escape *aionian* punishments. Again, i., 14, he says to Autolycus: "Believe now, lest you should be made to believe by the torments of *aionian* punishments. . . . Study the Scriptures that you may escape *aionian* punishments, and obtain *aionian* blessings of God." Again he says, "God will give to those who persist in good, *immortality* and *aionian*, i. e., heavenly life." To sinners, wrath, and finally, *aionian* fire, shall receive them.

He thus agrees with Irenæus in ascribing immortality only to the good, but does not like him expressly teach the annihilation of the wicked. There is no reason to deny that he used *aionios*, as did Irenæus and Justin Martyr, to denote a long and indefinite period or age, and in one passage (ii., 26) he seems to teach universal restoration. It is quoted by A. St. John in Ballou's "History," p. 46, note: "As a vessel, which, after it has been made, has some flaw, is remade or remoulded, that it may become new and right, so it comes to man by death. For in some way or other he is broken up, that he may come forth, in the resurrection, whole—I mean spotless, and righteous, and immortal."

## CHAPTER XXXII.

### *GENERAL COUNCILS ON FUTURE RETRIBUTION.*

It is well known that a peculiar authority is ascribed to the results of general or œcumenical councils. Any doctrine recognized by them as fundamental is ever after regarded as an essential part of the faith of the Church. Any doctrine condemned and anathematized by them is ever after stigmatized as a heresy.

It is, therefore, a question of considerable interest, Has the doctrine of universal restoration ever been thus condemned and anathematized? Not that we give to general councils any inspired authority to establish articles of faith, but because such decisions have ever exerted, and still do exert, great influence on hundreds of millions of professing Christians. In the Church of Rome, as well as in the Greek Church, the decisions of an œcumenical council are conclusive, and from them there is no appeal.

### ANCIENT CREEDS.

In a previous chapter we considered the expression of belief in the life of the world to come, in the Nicene and other ancient creeds, as an equivalent to the belief of *aionian* life, professed in the Apostles' Creed, and which is translated "eternal life."

### REMARKABLE FACT.

It is a remarkable fact that this brief annunciation of belief in the life of the world to come is all that is found

in any œcumenical creed, and that this relates to the future state of the righteous, and not at all to the retribution of the wicked. However important the questions as to eternal punishment or annihilation or universal restoration may be, they have found no place in the creed of any œcumenical council ; so absorbingly did the questions of the Trinity and the person of Christ occupy the mind of the Church, and fix the standard of orthodoxy. But, though such are the facts, they are not in general so apprehended.

#### HISTORICAL EXPLANATION.

We have seen that in the local Council of Constantinople, in the year 544, Origen's doctrine of universal restoration was for the first time condemned and anathematized. In addition to this, the impression has been general that it has been condemned by an œcumenical council also. It is not difficult to explain the origin of this impression. There was a general Council of Constantinople held in 553, nine years after the local council in 544 ; and, by a not uncommon species of pious fraud, the action of the local council has been ascribed to the œcumenical council, for the sake of giving to it greater authority. But the matter of fact is, that the doctrine of universal restoration was not condemned in that council, and has never been formally condemned in any œcumenical council whatever. It is no doubt true that in two or three general councils Origen was condemned, among other heretics, but his alleged errors were so numerous that a general condemnation of him as a heretic would not imply a specific condemnation of this particular doctrine, especially as in a number of local councils it was passed by, while many other Origenistic errors were condemned. But that it was not condemned at the general Council of Constantinople in 553 will be apparent

from a consideration of the end for which that council was called, and from the nature of their action. It was called in opposition to the Nestorians, and not in opposition to Origen or his doctrines. This is plain from the nature of their results and their anathemas. These are all aimed at the Nestorian errors of Theodore of Mopsuestia and others.

## REMARKABLE EVIDENCE.

One thing is very remarkable and conclusive as an evidence that the council did not intend to condemn the doctrine of universal restoration, namely, that though it was repeatedly avowed in the extracts from the writings of Theodore laid before the council, yet it was not specifically condemned, and no anathema was directed against it. The council devoted itself to the condemnation of the peculiar errors of Nestorianism.

A striking proof that the condemnation of Origen was no part of the intended original action of the council, but was afterward introduced by fraud, is found in the fact that in the letter of Justinian to the council the name of Origen does not occur in the list of the heretics whom the emperor called on them to condemn. Hence, when we find it in the list of heretics condemned by the council, there can be no doubt that it was fraudulently introduced by the same person who introduced the action of the local council, and who neglected to introduce the name of Origen into the list of Justinian. He did not complete his work of fraud, but exposed himself by not surveying the whole ground to be covered to make his fraudulent work complete.

## TESTIMONY OF HISTORIANS.

This view of the action of the second Ecumenical Council of Constantinople is substantially sustained by the suf-

frages of the leading modern historians of the Church, such as Neander, Hagenbach, Gieseler, Mosheim, Dr. Schaff, etc. It is true that some of them ascribe the transfer of the doings of the local Council of Constantinople to the Œcumenical Council, to a mistake in confounding the two councils, and not to fraud. But the facts of the case, and the known usages of the age, lead us decidedly to the belief of a pious fraud, as we have stated. At all events, whether by mistake or by fraud, an action was imputed to the second Œcumenical Council of Constantinople which was never taken by them. So far were they from condemning the doctrine of universal restoration in Origen, that they did not even condemn it in Theodore of Mopsuestia, though it was clearly and repeatedly placed before their eyes in the extracts from his writings, which we have quoted in a former number.

#### EFFECTS OF FALSE BELIEF.

Nevertheless, the fact that it was generally believed that Origen's doctrine of universal restoration was condemned by this general council, exerted a great influence, in subsequent ages, in suppressing that doctrine. Neander says, "It had great influence in bringing about the later more general practice of treating Origen as a heretic, that a decree of this sort was ascribed to an œcumenical council" (vol. ii., p. 704).

We need not be surprised, therefore, if from this time, at least in the Latin and Greek Churches, the doctrine of universal restoration should generally disappear. The sixth century is generally regarded as the beginning of the dark ages, that extended to the sixteenth century. Barbarian invasions more and more arrested the progress of intel-

lectual culture. Free thought was generally suppressed, and ecclesiastical authority was supreme.

#### THE NESTORIANS.

For some centuries, as we have formerly stated, in the extreme East, beyond the boundaries of the Roman Empire, there was among the Nestorians more intellectual progress and extended missionary enterprise. This period extended from 762 to 1258. After this they suffered persecutions from the Tartars, and were almost exterminated by the merciless Tamerlane. Of him Rev. T. Laurie, in his history of the Nestorians, says: "It will give some idea of his ferocity to state that in 1380 he built up two thousand men alive, with mortar, in the form of a tower, who thus miserably perished. Seven years later, he piled up seventy thousand human heads in the public squares of Ispahan; and in 1401 ninety thousand in the city of Bagdad. Three years previous, he massacred one hundred thousand prisoners in his invasion of India, and in 1400 he buried alive four thousand Armenian horsemen, whom he had taken prisoners at Sivas. Such was the man whose fury seems to have put an end to the missionary activity of the Nestorians, while from many countries it blotted out their very name" ("Dr. Grant and the Mountain Nestorians," p. 54).

#### RESULT.

The result of all these causes has been that although for some centuries the doctrine of final restoration was widely prevalent in the early Church, yet it disappeared about the sixth century in the Latin and Greek Churches, and has not reappeared in the leading modern Evangelical Churches.

It is also true that, in the Romish Church, as well as in the Greek, the doctrine of future eternal punishment is

clearly taught. This, at least, is true of the authorized catechisms in use in these churches.

The doctrine of universal restoration, in the Nestorian churches, disappeared by a nearly universal extermination of those churches. During the dark ages it was held by now and then an individual like John Scotus Erigena. The Romish Church also has accused the Albigenses and some other sects of holding this doctrine.

But since the Reformation, as all are aware, it has extensively revived in Europe and America. In Europe, very many evangelical men, eminent for learning and for Christian character, have advocated the doctrine. In this country it has not been generally connected with the evangelical system.

We have thus traced our history to the sixth century, and given an outline of the course of belief from that century to the present time. We shall not at present enter further into the details of the history, but shall suspend our narrative with a view of the doctrine in the eighth century, as set forth by John of Damascus.

#### JOHN OF DAMASCUS.

He represents the orthodoxy of the Greek Church after the council of Justinian had condemned universal restoration, and was a believer in future eternal punishment. His use of the words *aion* and *aionios*, as a writer of Greek, will be found interesting and instructive.

Of his leading theological work, "An Accurate Exposition of the Orthodox Faith," Neander says that it is "the most important doctrinal text-book of the Greek Church." He was the most eminent man of his century in theology and philosophy, and is revered as a saint in the Latin as well as in the Greek Church. He aimed not at original-

ity, but at a clear exposition of the established orthodox system.

His system closes with these words: "We shall rise from our graves, our spirits shall be united to our bodies, and we shall stand before the tremendous judgment-seat of Christ, and there the devil, and antichrist, his man of sin, and also all impenitent and flagitious men, shall be given over to the *aionian* fire, a fire not material as ours, but one which God understands. But they who have done good shall shine forth as the sun with the angels unto *aionian* life, with our Lord Jesus Christ, seeing him always, and being seen, and enjoying an endless joy from him, praising him with the Father and the Holy Spirit to endless ages of ages."

## AION AND AIONIOS.

In what sense he uses the word *aionian* we can ascertain from other parts of his work. In book ii., chapter i., he has a full and labored discussion of *aion*, which I will translate. In the first place we are to notice that he regards *aion* as always a designation of a period of time, and not of a material world. He also speaks of God as the maker of the ages (*aions*), giving a time-sense to passages like Heb. i. 2, "By whom also he made the (worlds) ages." Of God he says, "He made the *aions* who was before the *aions*, to whom David said from *aion* to *aion* thou art, and the apostle by whom also he made the *aions*." How God can create ages, he does not say.

After this introduction, he enters upon a full exposition of the senses of the word *aion*. He says: "We should know that the word *aion* has many significations. For, 1. The life of every man is called *aion*; 2. Again, the period of one thousand years is called *aion*; 3. Again, the whole duration or life of this world is called *aion*; and, 4. The



endless life after the resurrection is called the *aion* to come."

In another place he says: "There are reckoned seven *aions* of this world (each one thousand years), that is, from the creation of heaven and earth until the common consummation and the resurrection of men. For the death of each one is an individual close; but the common and universal close and consummation is when the resurrection of all shall occur. But the eighth *aion* is the *aion* to come."

Again he says: "There are *aions* of *aions*. Since the seven *aions* of this present world include many *aions* or lives of men, and that great *aion* of the world includes them all, and the present *aion* and the *aion* to come is called the *aion* of the *aion*, the expressions *aionian* life (i. e., life of the world to come), and *aionian* punishment (i. e., punishment of the world to come), disclose the endlessness of the coming *aion*." Hence the idea of eternity is not in the word *aionios*, but is derived from the endlessness of the *aion* which it designates. For he had previously stated that the coming age is to be endless. Thus, as in Olympiodorus, when the periods spoken of are limited, *aionios* is used to denote a limited duration, as opposed to endless ages, so, here, when the coming age is by assumption endless, *aionios* receives a corresponding force. That the coming *aion* will be endless, he proceeds to show. He assumes the statement (Rev. xxii. 5), "there shall be no night there," and says that "after the resurrection time shall not be numbered by days and nights, for there shall be to the righteous one day without night, the Sun of righteousness shining above them, but to sinners a dark and endless night. To designate the idea *endless*, he does not here use *aionios*, but *aperantos*.

## AN ENDLESS AION.

He also applies *aion* to denote the undivided temporal movement and interval of such an endless world. He says: "That which is not time nor any part of time measured by the motion and course of the sun, or composed of a succession of days and nights, but that temporal movement and interval which extends alongside of eternal things, is called *aion*. For what time is to those under time, that is this *aion* to eternal things." Of this *aion* he says: "In this aspect there is one *aion* with reference to which God is called *aionios* and *proaionios* (before the *aion*), for he made the *aion*. For God alone being without beginning is the maker of all *aions*, and of all things that exist."

According to this, no *aion* denotes an absolute eternity, for God exists above them all, and is the maker of them. We think that in these speculations John has wandered beyond the sphere of comprehensible thought. But one thing is plain, that *aion* never by itself denotes eternity any more than does our word *age*, and that to impart to it this idea the age must be extended forever by supposition or definition. It is equally evident that *aionios* has not in itself the idea of eternity, and acquires it only when it relates to an age which by definition and assumption is eternal.

What precedes concludes the history essentially as published in the *Christian Union*. I have carefully considered all criticisms, and believe my positions to be impregnable.

## CHAPTER XXXIII.

### *ANSWERS TO INQUIRIES.*

WHILE the articles of which this volume mainly consists were coming out in the *Christian Union*, and subsequently, there came to me letters containing inquiries as to my own views, and I was requested to declare them. To these communications I replied that I had undertaken to give an impartial history, and not to state my own views. I relied also on the fact that, in two works of mine, "The Conflict of Ages" and "The Concord of Ages," there is a full statement of my views up to the date of the last of those publications, 1860. But, as in one respect I have changed my views, a brief statement may be necessary to indicate my position, and to throw light on what I may proceed to say. I do not indeed attach any weight to my opinions as authority, and I confide in intelligent readers to draw their own inferences impartially from historical facts, established by competent evidence. Yet my views in this history can be better understood in view of a few facts.

In the year 1827, being then pastor of the Park Street Church, in Boston, and in the midst of the great Unitarian controversy of New England, I became satisfied of two things: in the first place, that the true and Scriptural doctrine of original sin and human depravity, and a thorough doctrine of regeneration, could not be sustained on any

form of the doctrine of the fall of the human race in Adam, but that on the ground of preëxistence they could be maintained, in a form honorable to God and salutary to men.

I was satisfied that things were tending, by reason of the power of well-founded objections to the common doctrine of the Fall and its consequences, to such concessions as would finally explain away the true doctrine of original sin and human depravity, and introduce in its place one light and superficial.

I also believed, in the second place, that, as a result of this development, the doctrine of future eternal punishment would be given up, and a system of universal restoration take its place.

In writing those two books, after a study of more than twenty years, I aimed to prevent these results.

One sentence from "The Conflict of Ages" will show this as to future eternal punishment. In the fifteenth chapter of the fifth book, I stated eleven arguments for the truth of a system based on preëxistence. Of these, the eighth was as follows :

"It alone leads to such an understanding of the doctrine of future eternal punishments as, connected with the previous suffering of God, shall properly throw the sympathies of all holy minds on the side of God, and put an end to that reaction which tends so fatally to destroy the true and indispensable power of that doctrine."

In the sixth chapter of the fifth book of "The Concord of Ages," I set forth at length and defended that view of eternal punishment. I did not, however, enter into the scriptural proof of it, but assumed it.

At that time I was under the power of a full belief that *aionios* means endless. In coming to this belief, I

had been greatly influenced by the elaborate treatise of Prof. Stuart on *aion*, *olam*, and other words connected with the doctrine of retribution. I was also influenced by the article "Aion," in the "Religious Encyclopædia," in which an appeal was made to the supposed testimony of Aristotle. I then supposed that it was correctly translated. But, as this work shows, my opinion on the import of those words has undergone a change. This was originated by reading the profound essays of Prof. Tayler Lewis, in Lange's "Commentaries," to which I have referred, and by the subsequent extensive investigations which I felt it to be my duty to make.

My views, also, on another point have been changed. Like Prof. Shedd, I had been too much influenced by Hagenbach's statements. The statements, also, of Müncher, in his "Elements of Dogmatic History," translated by Dr. Murdock, had exerted a great influence on me. I had heard of "faint intimations" and "feeble glimmerings" of hope of future restoration by authors in whom, on examination of their original writings, I found the full assurance of hope. In like manner, their numbers, Christian character, and power, I found to be undervalued. It was not until I had gone to the original sources, and read the ancient restorationists themselves, that I understood their history in its relations and full extent. The same was true of my conceptions as to the ancient believers in annihilation. The results of those investigations I have given.

On one point I have undergone no change, and that is, in the belief that the doctrine of eternal punishment cannot be sustained or defended on the ground on which it is placed by the orthodox generally; that is, the doctrine of the fall in Adam, as it is explained either by Dr. Hodge,

of Princeton, or Dr. Shedd, of New York, or Dr. Woods, of Andover, or any other orthodox man whom I have ever read. I believe that to punish endlessly men born as any form of that system represents, and placed in this world as men are, under satanic delusions and powerful evil social influences, would be an extreme of injustice and cruelty that would entirely transform the character of God. My views on that point have been published, and generally known, over twenty years, and I have seen no cause to change them.

If, therefore, I were called on to choose between the doctrine of eternal punishment as generally held by the orthodox, and some form of universal restoration, I should decidedly choose the latter. I regard the doctrine of future eternal punishment on the basis of the fall in Adam, as an impossibility with God. What God's nature is, we know. He has so fully revealed it in Christ that we cannot misunderstand it. We know, too, that it cannot produce effects contrary to itself. And the facts alleged as to eternal punishment, on the basis of the fall in Adam, are contrary to the essential nature and character of God.

I do not propose now to enter into this argument. I have done it fully in the works which I have mentioned. I did this as required by a sacred sense of duty. I felt called on to testify for God before men, that I did not impute such acts to him. I did it, also, to fulfill a duty to my fellow-Christians, and to all men ; that is, to let them know that, though I still continued to preach the doctrine of eternal punishment, I did not do it on a ground dishonorable to God, and injurious to man.

Notwithstanding my testimony, and arguments, the leaders of the Church have, as a general fact, declined to

accept the basis on which alone I believe the doctrine of endless punishment can be defended. It follows, of necessity, that as between them and the restorationists—if I were shut up to that choice—my sympathies and convictions would be with the restorationists. But I am not shut up to that alternative. I can take another position. But, as things are, in the controversy between the orthodox, who base the doctrine on Adam's fall, and *Evangelical* restorationists, my sympathies are with the restorationists. Still I do not hold that the doctrine of preëxistence necessarily results in future endless punishment. In the case of Origen it did not. But if endless punishment is declared in the word of God, then that is the only basis on which it can be defended. The great question then is, "Is it so declared in the word of God?"

It appears, however, that one of the Scriptural proofs of the endlessness of punishment on which I mainly relied is fallacious. The words of Christ do not expressly declare it. Neither do they deny it. Nor do the opinions of the ancient restorationists disprove it. They are not infallible.

But the question still arises, "Does not the general system of the Bible imply it, and other statements prove it?" On this point the Scriptures ought to be more profoundly examined than they ever have been, and I claim the right to reserve my opinion until I have reëxamined them, and listened to the arguments of candid and impartial Christian men. At a proper time I shall not hesitate to speak freely and fully.

I will only say that, if the doctrine is to be sustained, I have given, in the books mentioned, the only basis on which in my opinion it can be done.

With regard to these books I may be excused for say-

ing that, although there have been many judicial opinions pronounced against them, yet the arguments contained in them have never been fairly stated, considered, and answered. If the Church desire universal restoration in some form, or even annihilation, to prevail, they have taken, in my opinion, the most effectual course to produce that result. On the common basis the doctrine of endless punishment, in my judgment, admits of no defense.

It is in vain to say that we are incompetent to reason from the attributes of God what he can or cannot do.

This is not the doctrine of the Bible. It teaches us not only that we can know God, but that we can know him intimately and certainly. Indeed, it was the main end of Christ to bring men to such a knowledge of God. He has revealed himself as sympathetic, self-denying, and self-sacrificing: "In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only-begotten Son into the world that we might live through him;" and again, "Hereby we perceive the love of God, because he laid down his life for us." Such God always has been, and we can know that there are some things which such a God cannot do, and among them are the things ascribed to him by the doctrine of the fall in Adam. On this subject I refer to the works in which I have considered this point at large.



## CHAPTER XXXIV.

### *SOME POSSIBLE RESULTS OF THIS HISTORY.*

It was indicated, in my opening remarks, that I have had reference in this history to the existing world-wide discussion as to future endless punishment. I propose, accordingly, to consider what some of the results of the facts stated may be.

#### IS IT AN OPEN QUESTION?

The important facts stated may raise the inquiry, "Why should not the question as to the nature and duration of punishment in the world to come be an open question, as it was in the best of the early ages of the Church?"

If anything has been proved beyond all rational question, it is that in the days of Justin Martyr, Irenæus, Origen, and his first great circle of friends, and hearers, and readers, it was so. Each of the three theories as to future retribution was held by eminently pious men, without alarm, protest, or prosecution. Who ever assailed Justin Martyr, that zealous advocate of Christianity, who boldly defended the cause of Christ in two pleas addressed to the two Antonines, and who sealed his testimony with his blood, or Irenæus, the great defender of Christianity against the delusions of the Gnostics, because they taught the annihilation of the wicked? Who ever in his own age assailed Origen, that eminent Christian, excelled in devoted piety

by no man in the history of the Church, and the intellectual leader of his own age, because he taught the restoration of all men to holiness? In subsequent miserable years he was assailed for this; but when Eusebius and Pamphilus wrote their apology for him, and stated all the charges against him that they could find, this was not one. Even Epiphanius, in his earliest assaults, does not mention it.

If any man had been professedly an earnest defender and champion of endless punishment in this age, he would not have suffered odium for it, but there was no such man. True, some eminent men did avow their belief of it, and appeal to it as a motive, but no man zealously defended it as *the established doctrine of the Church, the only catholic doctrine*—not even Augustine did this. This was reserved for a more degraded age, and for such divines as the despotic emperor Justinian, who, if he had not seasonably died, would have been involved in the gross heresy of Aphthartodocetism, which tended to neutralize or annihilate the purely human element in Christ. He was preparing to enact it by a law, when, fortunately for the peace and reputation of the Church, he died (*see* Neander, "Church History," ii., 772, Torrey). In view of such facts the inquiry will naturally arise, "Why should we not in this respect follow the earliest development of the primitive Church?" An appeal to the example of the early Church is often made with great solemnity and emphasis. The inquiry will naturally arise, "Why should we not follow their example in this respect also?"

## IS IT SAFE?

But there are those who fear the result of relaxing the stringency of belief in the doctrine of eternal punishment. Man, they tell us, is deeply depraved, and need the power

of infinite motives to deter him from sin, and turn him to God. It is also said to be necessary, in order to teach the infinite demerit of sin, to assign to it an endless punishment.

It is impossible not to respect the sincerity and the motives of those who thus reason. But this is not the time and place to enter into such a discussion. I wish simply to say that the facts stated in this history will be looked on by thoughtful men in their bearings on that question. These statements clearly show that all who held to universal restoration in the early ages were, as a universally-conceded fact, eminent and devoted Christians. Nor is this all. They were peculiarly distinguished for the excellence and loveliness of their Christian character. I will not repeat the eulogium of the calm and judicial Mosheim on Origen, as the most eminent saint of any age. It is easy to turn to it, and read it on pp. 182, 3. In like manner Gregory of Nyssa and his sister Macrina were among the most beautiful and lovely Christians of that age. The same is true of others; and as to missionary zeal, those who revered and followed the great Theodore of Mopsuestia were distinguished for their intelligence, liberality, zeal in the cause of education, and enthusiasm in missionary enterprise, and were immeasurably in advance of the debased Church of Justinian and his successors, by which they were excommunicated and anathematized. In short, I do not know an unworthy, low, or mean character in any prominent, open, and avowed restorationist of that age of freedom of inquiry, which was inaugurated by the Alexandrian school and defended by Origen. As to Theodore of Mopsuestia, who introduced the doctrine of universal restoration into the liturgy of the Nestorians, it would be well once more to read Dorner's eulogium of him, which I will not here repeat. It may be found on page 193. It may not be true

that these results were owing mainly to the doctrine of universal restoration. It may be that their views of Christ and the gospel, which were decidedly orthodox, exerted the main power to produce these results. But one thing is true: The doctrine of universal restoration did not hinder them. If not, then the inquiry will arise, "Why should it now?"

But besides this it is true, and their works show it, that these ancient believers in final restoration lived and toiled and suffered in an atmosphere of joy and hope, and were not loaded with a painful and crushing burden of sorrow in view of the endless misery of innumerable multitudes. It is also worthy of notice that in Dwight's "Travels in the North of Germany," published in New York, 1829, coincident facts are stated, as to evangelical German restorationists. He says: "So far as an opinion can be formed of them from their reputation and from their conversation, we must look in vain for brighter examples of piety than they exhibit. They certainly manifest a greater spirit of love for those who differ from them than is found in most of our sects, and they feel very unwilling to shut the gates of heaven against those who do not believe every article of their creed. In this charity and love, the Christians of most Protestant countries would do well to imitate them" (p. 423). He also makes very strong statements as to the extensive prevalence of these views among the evangelical Christians of Germany.

#### IS IT FUNDAMENTAL?

The inquiry will also arise in view of the historical facts which have been developed, "Is the doctrine of endless punishment a *fundamental* doctrine?" By this is not meant, is it a part of the general belief or creed of a de-

nomination, but is it essential to accomplish the work for which Christ died? What is that work? To regenerate and sanctify men by faith in Christ. If this is so, then the most fundamental truths are those which relate to human depravity, and regeneration, and the atonement of Christ, and the influences of the Holy Spirit, and the life of Christ as the great exemplar of the Christian life. These are of fundamental importance. For, if the nature and depth of the disease are unknown, how can a radical cure be effected? And how can it be effected except by faith in Christ and his atonement by the regenerating influences of the Holy Spirit. But if these are held and faithfully used to convince men of sin and turn them to God and a holy life through faith in Christ, the inquiry will arise, "Why should differing views as to the exact nature and duration of the retributions of the future state prevent their successful operation?"

The words of the very orthodox Dr. George Hill, of Scotland, whom Dr. Chalmers followed as his guide in his own theological lectures, are weighty on this point. He says: "The great doctrine which theology clearly teaches, with regard to the future condition of men, is this, that by the righteousness of Jesus Christ there is conveyed to all who believe a right to eternal life. *This is the only point which it is of any importance for us distinctly to understand.*" At the close of the chapter he adds a few words on the question of eternal punishment. They amount to this: "That on subjects so infinitely removed beyond the sphere of our observation" *we should speculate with extreme caution*; that that view of the love of God, and its efficacy, which is implied in the doctrine that hell-torments are not eternal "naturally creates a prejudice in favor of it," but as the happiness of the righteous and the

punishment of the wicked are described by the same term, "it *seems* to teach us that both are of equal duration." If, now, he had been convinced that *aionios* does not designate duration, but the scene of the life and punishment of the world to come, this well-poised man might have been still less inclined to make the doctrine of eternal punishment a fundamental doctrine. Robert Hall, who believed it, openly declared that it was not fundamental, and many of the most eminent Christians of modern times have not held it, and yet, so far as we can judge, have not suffered in their Christian character by reason of the denial.

The English and American Episcopal Church do not regard it as fundamental. It was once in the articles of the mother Church, but after mature consideration it was removed. It never was in the Articles of the American Church, and a belief of it is not requisite for ordination.

#### IS THE QUESTION INSOLUBLE?

The view of that learned scholar and eminent orthodox divine, Dr. Tayler Lewis, that *aionian* punishment does not mean endless punishment, but "*the punishment of the world to come*," and the proof that has been given that in the early ages the words were so understood, will naturally raise the inquiry, "Since Christ has not decided the duration of future punishment, can it be proved at all?" Indeed, it has already raised the inquiry. An anonymous writer in Massachusetts, understood to be an eminent Congregational clergyman, in good standing, has undertaken in an able work to show, on these grounds, that the question is insoluble, and that neither of the three theories can be proved, clearly and decidedly, from Scripture, and that a man questioned on his belief as to endless punishment, or annihilation, or universal restoration, has a right

to say, "It is not revealed which is true, and I do not know, and no man or body of men has a right to impose on me a positive belief of either of the three current answers to the question."

The question will arise—nay, it has arisen—"If a man takes this ground, and yet says that there will be a fearful punishment hereafter, from which God has warned men in earnest words to escape, by faith in Christ, shall he be excluded from Christian fellowship, and a regular ministerial standing in the Congregational denomination?" As yet, no steps have been taken to put the clergyman spoken of, out of fellowship, and probably none will be. Very probably, the words of Dr. George Hill, as to salvation by faith in Christ, which have been quoted, will be applied to such a case: "This is the only point which it is of any importance for us distinctly to understand." If the punishment is regarded as fearful, and so great in the sight of God, that he gave his Son to die for us to save us from it, the inquiry will arise, "Is not that enough?" How it will be answered remains to be seen.

## CHAPTER XXXV.

### *HAS THE CHURCH DECIDED IT?*

I HAVE already presented the view of Dr. Shedd, that the doctrine of eternal misery is a Catholic doctrine, firmly held by the early Church, with a few exceptions, and by the Church universal in every subsequent age. This history will probably awaken inquiry on that point, and perhaps lead to a revision of judgments.

Others besides Dr. Shedd have assumed that the doctrine of endless punishment has been the doctrine of the Church universal from the beginning. Many have said that there is no way to explain this fact except to admit that the doctrine is plainly taught in the Word of God, for it is a doctrine repugnant to the natural feelings and wishes of mankind. This view once had great weight with me, for I relied on the statements of Hagenbach and Münscher, and I am disposed to treat all who hold it with great respect.

But, after a careful investigation, I have come to the conclusion that the fact alleged does not exist. In this history I have given my reasons for this belief, and, if well founded, they may effect a change of opinion in those who have been wont to appeal to an early Church united in the belief of endless punishment. I have shown that until the sixth century, under Justinian, there was no decision against universal restoration, and in favor of endless punishment, and that it had never been made the subject of



elaborate and profound discussion, as was the case with the Trinity and the person of Christ. I have shown the reason of this, that previous influential writings, generally read in the days of Christ and the apostles, had presented conflicting views on the subject. I have also shown that when universal restoration was developed in the Alexandrine school, and in the school at Antioch, and at Cesarea, and at Edessa, there was but one school that defended eternal punishment. It is also true that the defenders of the doctrine of restoration were not exceeded in intellectual power, learning, and Christian character, by any men of the age. Who were greater in all these respects than Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Didymus the Blind, Gregory of Nyssa, Diodore of Tarsus, Theodore of Mopsuestia, Eusebius of Cesarea, and Theodoret? All these were avowed restorationists. And there is no reason to doubt that Heraclas of Alexandria, Gregory Thaumaturgus, and Athenodorus of Pontus, should be added to the list. These were all illustrious men. They were zealous, working Christians. They were honorable men. Who, on the side of future punishment, deserves such a eulogy as Dr. Schaff has given to Origen, and Dorner to Theodore of Mopsuestia? If Jerome is mentioned, I concede his learning; but he would have been counted on the side of Origen if he had been a bold and honorable man, for he has left on eternal record, and unretracted, a full declaration of the principles of Origen as his own. And his subsequent abbreviated and eviscerated doctrine of endless punishment was only a shield against attacks by Epiphanius and others on his orthodoxy. Great in learning he was, but he was not a noble-spirited and honorable man, or he would boldly and openly have taken a stand with Origen, to whom he owed *so* much—not indeed on all points, but certainly on this.

Are Chrysostom, Basil, Gregory of Nazianzum, mentioned? They were great men; but they all had been taught by restorationist teachers, and were in intimate fellowship with restorationists, and never attacked the system of restoration, but gave indications that they, *esoterically* at least, believed it.

But, at least, there was Augustine. Yes, and he was a great and good man; and there may have been Cyril of Jerusalem, and Cyril of Alexandria, who was not an honorable man; and Lactantius and Hilary. But, of all these, Augustine only has come out as an open and decided opposer of the doctrine of restoration. But, if the others had believed and taught endless punishment, weigh them and compare them with the other side. Are they the Church? After all, the statement of Doederlein is in perfect accordance with facts: ("Quanto quis altius eruditione in antiquitate Christiana eminuit, tanto magis spem finiendorum olim cruciatuum aluit atque defendit" ("Theology," § 223, Obs. 8). That is, "The more profoundly learned any one was in Christian antiquity, so much the more did he cherish and defend the hope that the sufferings of the wicked would at some time come to an end."

In fact, there was no early organized decision of a council on the subject; but, beyond all doubt, in the age of Origen and his scholars, and in the times of Theodore of Mopsuestia, the weight of learned and influential ecclesiastics was on the side of universal restoration.

There were in this age all the materials of an elaborate and profound discussion, if the advocates of eternal punishment had known how to use them. The mind of Origen was of wide reach and fruitful. He introduced elements of great power. By his doctrine of preëxistence he enabled them to remove the difficulties from the doctrine of

original sin, that made eternal punishment so horrible to Ezra. But Epiphanius and the monks were incapable of seeing the relations of this powerful element to the system. As pearls before swine, so were the enlarged views of Origen before them. There was a lamentable and humiliating course of things downward till the days of Justinian. Then that despotic emperor assumed to declare, by his subservient council, in the name of the Church, what the Church had never debated or decided, and what, in her best days, her most eminent leaders had rejected.

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## CHAPTER XXXVI.

### WHAT SHOULD BE DONE?

To this inquiry I reply by referring to the statement of Dr. Schaff, quoted at the opening of this history. The import of that is, that the whole energy of the Church, in the highest state of holiness and communion with God, has never been brought to bear upon this subject, so as to result in a thorough and reliable investigation of the whole great question. And do not the facts show it? For, since the time of the miserable decision of Justinian, there has never been in the Church an investigation of this subject worthy of the name. True, since the Reformation, individuals have defended universal restoration or annihilation, but there has been in the great organized churches a fixedness and immobility which is not the result of any antecedent profound investigation, but simply of unreasoning inertia and uninquiring tradition. This great apathetic mass should be penetrated by a profound interest in all that is involved in this greatest of all questions. For it is a question that more distinctly involves the character of God than any other, and it cannot be settled merely by quoting texts.

#### THE PREVIOUS QUESTION.

There is a previous question to be settled, and that is, *What is the doctrine of endless punishment as it is in fact held by the Church?* This can be decided only by

ascertaining whether there is in fact any other doctrine inseparably connected with it, and on which its whole moral character depends.

The doctrine of future endless punishment can be held as it is presented in the book of Enoch, as based on the fall of the angels, or it can be held as it is presented in the apocalypse of Ezra, as growing out of the fall of Adam, by a divine law of transmission of evil. As it is now generally held by the Church, the view of Ezra is modified, but still the fall in Adam, and original sin thence resulting, are regarded as the fundamental facts that called for the interposition of Christ.

#### HISTORIC VIEW.

It is a noteworthy fact that at the time of Justinian's decree, establishing endless punishment, the Augustinian doctrine of original sin, through the fall in Adam, was imposed on the Latin Church for the first time, and through her on European and American Christendom. This doctrine, in all its forms, so changes the doctrine of endless punishment as to darken the divine character, and fill the mind with anguish. It was this doctrine that caused the lamentations of Ezra, which I have quoted, in view of the doom of man, and his declaration that no system would be better than such a system, and this feeling has revealed itself in every age. Yet, by Augustine, the doctrine of eternal punishment, against most impassioned protests, was based on the fact that all men sinned in Adam, and were condemned in him, and lost their power to all good. This has been modified by Dr. Hodge, of Princeton, into a representative sinning, but with the same results. But Dr. Shedd adheres to Augustine. New England has modified the system, but has not removed the difficulty.

## POSSIBILITIES.

All admit that there are acts supposable, which would be unjust, merciless, unfeeling, and cruel, in God.

Now, what must be directly looked in the face is this, that, even if the doctrine of endless punishment were true, and actually revealed in the Bible, yet it is possible to connect it with such statements as entirely to reverse its character, and make it an infinite dishonor to God. If this were in fact done, not intentionally, but really, then to prove the doctrine, *so connected*, by any number of texts, is not to prove the truth, but falsely to cast infinite dishonor on God.

Now, when it is said that God regards men as guilty of an act which they never committed, and which was done before they had a being, and for it declares them guilty, and out of communion with God, and incapable of any holy action, and dead in sin, and sure to reach endless misery if not regenerated by God, and when it is added that the majority are not so regenerated, it certainly seems that these acts are unfeeling, unjust, cruel, merciless; and yet these acts are by orthodox men indissolubly connected with the doctrine of eternal punishment. Now, if these acts are, in fact, what they seem to be, then to prove the doctrine of eternal punishment by Scripture texts is to make the Bible impute to God the greatest dishonor in the universe. Has it ever been proved that these acts are not what they seem to be? No. Dr. Hodge expressly declares that the system thus stated "cannot be explained on the common-sense principles of moral government. The system which Paul taught was not a system of common sense, but of profound and awful mystery." Dr. Woods makes the same confession as to the New England

theory. "Here," he says, "our wisdom fails. We apply in vain to human reason or human consciousness for an answer." Nay, more: he even admits that such conduct is "contrary to the dictates of our fallible minds." Dr. Hodge has exposed the baselessness of Dr. Shedd's defense of God, in his review of Dr. Baird, and Dr. Baird has exposed that of Dr. Hodge. Dr. Schaff, in his "Commentary on the Romans," dissents from Dr. Hodge. He says, "How can an infinitely just and holy God punish countless millions of human beings simply and solely for the sin of another, in which they had no part whatever?" For relief he resorts to the equally absurd theory of Augustine, that all men *virtually*, or *potentially*, though *not personally*, sinned in Adam. But even this does not give rest, and harmonize the leaders of the Church. Dr. Schaff sets forth their division between three theories, and then adds, "Or they look for a still more satisfactory solution of the difficult problem by a future Augustine, who may be able to advance, from a deeper study of the Scriptures, the knowledge of the Church, and reconcile what now seem to be *irreconcilable contradictions*." Think of it! This is the result of the toil of centuries, to vindicate God from the charge of the most atrocious injustice and cruelty that the mind of man can conceive.

The acts seem to be unjust, merciless, unfeeling, and cruel, in God. No one has shown, or can show, that they are not; the leaders acknowledge that they cannot do it, and yet the whole doctrine of eternal punishment is based on this transaction; it grows out of it, and is indissolubly connected with it.

Now, what I wish to impress upon the minds of all is, that if there is a great responsibility, as is alleged, in de-

nying the doctrine of future eternal punishment, there is a still greater responsibility in affirming it on such a basis. It does not dishonor God to declare that he will not punish sinners forever. It does infinitely dishonor God to assert that he will punish sinners forever if he has dealt with them as this doctrine of sinning in Adam teaches.

It is a well-known fact that this doctrine so connected with eternal punishment has produced infidels—God only knows how many. The poet Shelley was one.

It has tended also to produce a false conception of God, as absorbed in himself, unsympathizing, intent on his own glory, and sacrificing his creatures to it. The almost universal denial of the suffering of God from the sins of his creatures, and the neutralizing of his sympathetic character in general, has resulted from such systems.

No discussion of the doctrine of future eternal punishment can be thorough that does not meet the doctrine in all its connections and relations. And, although the inertia of that vast body called the Church is almost unconquerable, when God's time comes, when the Church is holier and in more intimate communion with him, their apathy will pass away, and they will penetrate the whole subject to its very depths.

Meantime I will only say that the doctrine of eternal punishment is a heavy weight to bear in itself, and in the best manner in which it can be presented, but on the common basis of Christendom it is a crushing burden that cannot be borne. The Lord will remove such a burden in his day.

It is only a question of time. That result is sure to come. The whole system is based on a false interpreta-



tion of only one passage, which, properly interpreted, declares that, to make Adam a type of Christ, God passed on him a sentence of natural death, which fell on his posterity also. It declares this, and no more. The proof of this may be seen in the "Conflict of Ages," pp. 410-423. The argument there stated remains unanswered.

## CHAPTER XXXVII.

### *A LESSON OF THIS HISTORY.*

HAVING spoken of what may be some of the results of this history, I propose now in few words to consider one of the great lessons which are taught by it. I do not call in question the ability of my readers to interpret those lessons for themselves, yet I will not for that reason withhold my own interpretation of one of them.

#### INTELLECTUAL AND MORAL LIBERTY.

The great lesson is, that we ought to restore that intellectual and moral liberty that for a long time existed in the early Church on this subject, and which was destroyed mainly by Epiphanius, through his assault on Origen. I need not repeat what I have said on this liberty. It is enough to refer my readers to Chapter XX. of this history. After they have reconsidered that, I will proceed to show how that liberty was destroyed, and how it should be restored. That it was destroyed by Epiphanius and others, is conceded by the most eminent Church historians. Epiphanius had a monastic education, and relied on monastic followers as his troops. Hear now what Gieseler says: "In proportion as monachism gained strength, the prejudice strengthened against all use of human science or learning. There arose a crowd of traditional theologians, who, rejecting all free investigation, would hear of no opinion which

could not be found in the writings of the fathers. This character we see exemplified in Epiphanius, Bishop of Constantia, in Cyprus, from the year 367 to 403. Even in his "Panarion" (haer. 63 and 64) he betrays his bitter hatred of Origen; and, as soon as the Arian controversy was at an end, he appeared as his open assailant. While this new contest stopped the advance of theological science in the East, the Western world was bound in spiritual bondage by Augustine, and thus all free inquiry banished from the Church."

Of Epiphanius Dr. Schaff says: "He achieved his great fame mainly by his learned and intolerant zeal for orthodoxy. . . . He was a man of earnest monastic piety, and of sincere but illiberal zeal for orthodoxy. His good-nature easily allowed him to be used as an instrument for the passions of others, and his zeal was not according to knowledge. He is the patriarch of heresy-hunters. He identified Christianity with monastic piety, and ecclesiastical orthodoxy, and considered it the great mission of his life to pursue the thousand-headed hydra of heresy into all its hiding-places" (vol. ii., pp. 926, 927). He also, in speaking of the assaults on Origen which Epiphanius introduced, says that they show "the progress of orthodoxy under the twofold aspect of earnest zeal for the pure faith, and a narrow-minded intolerance toward all free speculation. The condemnation of Origen was a death-blow to theological science in the Greek Church, and left it to stiffen gradually into a mechanical traditionalism and formalism."

But it may be said: "What is all this to us? We are free men. We have never been in bondage to any man." To this I reply, This is more true than it was. But very extensively it is not true. For an evil spirit was developed

at that time in putting down Origen which has ever since poisoned the Church of all denominations. It has been as a leprosy in all Christendom. Nor is this all : measures were then resorted to for the suppression of error which exerted a deadly hostility against all free investigation, from the influence of which the Church universal has not yet recovered.

## THE EVIL SPIRIT.

The spirit that I refer to was a spirit of alarmism, and outcry, which appealed to the prejudices of the laity and clergy, and of the ignorant monks in the name of God and of Christianity, as if the interests of humanity were in danger of being shipwrecked, unless there was a universal rally and combination to put down some dangerous heretic. No state of mind can be more hostile to calm, free, loving inquiry than this.

Yet this state of feeling was introduced by Epiphanius against Origen, and after him was augmented from year to year, until the great Origen was not only condemned as a heretic, but it was made a point of orthodoxy by many, to believe that he was in hell, to experience forever the eternal torments which he had impiously denied.

Still it may be said : "What is this to us? No such things are done in this age and country."

I grant that the action of this spirit is not as violent and shameful as it was. But it is not yet purged out of the constitution of Christendom at large, nor even out of Protestant bodies in this country that talk of freedom. I have been knowing to a similar combination against one of the most eminent and godly divines of this country, Dr. N. W. Taylor, where the same kind of alarmism and outcry was used. I have known another eminent divine requested to join this combination, and to denounce Dr. Taylor, with the

promise that, if he would, the attack on his own orthodoxy should cease. And, when he nobly refused, I have known the vials of ecclesiastical wrath poured out on his head. Ridicule, misrepresentation, odium, and alarmism, were used against him, till, loaded with other cares, he almost sank beneath the burden. I was with him in his hours of trial, and did all in my power to aid, and cheer, and sustain him. I do not speak of a case which I do not fully understand, for, as a son, I was in full sympathy with him as my father, in all his trials.

Yet the men who did these things were, I believe, on the whole, real Christians, just as Epiphanius was. But obviously they had not recovered from that malignant disease which he introduced into the Church, and which has infected it in every subsequent age to this day.

In consequence of this treatment of Origen, who was one of the greatest men of any age, an unreasoning and violent prejudice has been connected with his doctrine of universal restoration, that makes those who are sensitive to their character for orthodoxy shrink from reading him, as from an infectious heretic, and neglect to study the history that is necessary to a true understanding of the man and of his system. We can all recall the day when the writings of the abolitionists, although written with candor, and clear and strong argument, and in a good spirit, were regarded as so odious that leading men were ashamed to be seen to read them, and, to use a familiar but expressive phrase, would not touch them even with a pair of tongs.

The same kind of feeling has been felt toward the writings of these ancient universalists. The Roman imperial Church has anathematized them, and covered them with odium. The original slanders have flowed down through the ages, and men have feared to know the truth

concerning them, if it was in their favor, as if it involved moral infection.

And even for what I have said in this history, although my simple aim has been to tell the truth, before God, as to these universalist Christians of the early ages, I have been publicly reproved by an old friend of mine, and a good Christian man, as if I had been unfaithful to orthodoxy. I am free to say, however, that these ancient and excellent Christians have been slandered and slurred, and obscured too long, and that, before God, I have had a zeal to vindicate them, and to set forth the truth concerning them.

And, further, I do not hesitate to say that the spirit that has slandered and depressed these men ought to be purged out of Christendom as it has not yet been, for it is a malignant and infectious disease, hostile to the best interests of humanity. I do not say that we ought to adopt their views. But I do say that all odium, and excitement, and alarmism, and misrepresentation, are hostile to the true liberty and intellectual progress of the Church. God is love, and to see all truth we must dwell in love. Much has been done to purge the moral atmosphere of Christendom by such loving writers as Neander, who endeavors to take the best view of every man, and to place his sentiments in the fairest light. We owe much to Germany for similar vindications of intellectual and moral liberty. And I do not deem it uncalled for to say that our Dr. Schaff, in his historical works, has honorably coöperated with Neander in the same great cause of intelligent Christian liberty. There are very many men among us of an enlarged, loving, and free spirit. But all of the evil and malignant spirit has not yet been purged out, so that all can freely walk in the light of God, and in the atmosphere of divine love.

The leaders of the Church, among whom I include the editors of religious newspapers, profess to believe that there is an assembly of holy saints and angels before the throne of an omniscient God, whom no false statement can deceive, and who abhors every unholy feeling. And yet how often do they write and speak as if afar off from that heavenly sphere, and under the influence of some earthly circle, some denomination or some party, or some body of patrons! They do not seem to realize that the great defence of truth is the presence of God, and that, to secure that presence, the indispensable requisite is that holiness which makes every man a temple of the Holy Ghost. When this is the case, and God is fully revealed, all error will be consumed by the truth of his mouth, and destroyed by the brightness of his coming.

#### PERNICIOUS MEASURES.

Besides this evil spirit, I have spoken of pernicious measures resorted to in the case of Origen. It was the resort to the votes of a majority in a synod or council, without thorough investigation and argument. Epiphanius attacked Origen in Jerusalem, after he was dead, and tried to make the Bishop John denounce him. Failing here, he tried to compel Jerome, through fear for his reputation for orthodoxy, to do the same, and succeeded so far as to disgrace Jerome forever for his meanness, and cowardice, and double-dealing. Then Theophilus, Bishop of Alexandria, came to his aid in anathematizing Origen. He called a synod in 399, in which he condemned Origen and anathematized all who should read his works. After this, Epiphanius died. But his followers pursued the same work in his spirit, till Origen was condemned again by Justinian, through a local council at Constantinople, as has been re-

lated. After this, in many general councils he was anathematized by name among other heretics. During all this prosecution, Origen made no reply, for he was dead. Nor was any competent man requested to defend him. The previous defense of him by Eusebius and Pamphilus shows to what an extent he had been slandered in their times. And yet the votes of synods and councils, thus manipulated, have expelled him from the Church, brought coarse accusations against him, and covered him with odium. Are such proceedings the voice of God through the Church? When to this mode of settling questions by the votes of councils was added imperial dictation, it made the Church in the Roman Empire a great electioneering camp-ground, in which to get votes in a general council, and to gain imperial favor, and so to secure a majority.

Of these councils Milman has truly said: "Nowhere is Christianity less attractive, and, if we look to the ordinary tone and character of the proceedings, less authoritative, than in the councils of the Church. It is, in general, a fierce collision of two rival factions, neither of which will yield, each of which is solemnly pledged against conviction. Intrigue, injustice, violence, decisions on authority alone, and that the authority of a turbulent majority, decisions by wild acclamation, rather than after sober inquiry, detract from the reverence and impugn the judgments, at least, of the later councils. The close is almost invariably a terrible anathema, in which it is impossible not to discern the tones of human hatred, of arrogant triumph, of rejoicing at the damnation imprecated against the humiliated adversary" ("Latin Christianity," i., 227).

To add to the evils of this unchristian mode of arriving at the truth, the decisions of such councils were sustained



by civil pains and penalties. Bishops who refused to obey were banished.

In the days of Origen, there were the elements of a profound and radical discussion of all the great problems of eschatology. All the leading solutions of the great questions involved had been produced. Why was there not such a discussion? The reasons are moral. The tone of piety had deteriorated. Intellectual propositions took the place of a holy life, and a highly-developed Christian spirit. If the intellectual problems were settled rightly, it was done in the spirit of the devil, and not of God.

But, it may be said, "What is all this to us, and to the question of retribution?" I answer, Much. In the first place, this state of things unfitted the leaders from understanding God as a suffering God, a long-suffering God, and made them capable of conceiving of a vengeful God, supremely absorbed in himself, and capable of malignant retribution; and this has been transmitted to us, and has not been universally renounced.

Again, it made them capable of ascribing to God such wrongful acts toward men, that they turn eternal punishment into a system of atrocious injustice, which makes God as much worse than the devil as he is greater and more widely influential in the universe. I refer to the various theories in which uncounted millions of the human race, by an act which they never committed, are said to be disabled, and made opposite to all good, and unable to do good, and then punished forever because they did not do good.

There is a supposition on which the doctrine of eternal punishment may be true, without wronging man, or introducing any new sinners into the universe. I have endeavored to show what it is in "The Conflict of Ages." But

the solution has not been accepted. I showed by historical induction that every form of the doctrine of the fall in Adam, from the Augustinian to the Princetonian, warred with justice, honor, and love in God. Dr. Baird then came out and renounced the Princeton theory, of representative sinning by Adam, and adopted the Augustinian view of sinning in him. Dr. Hodge annihilated him, and he in return annihilated Dr. Hodge. Dr. Schaff, in his commentary on the Romans, as I have said, comes to the conclusion that no satisfactory explanation of the contradictions of justice has been given, and that we must wait for God to raise up some new Augustine to explain it. Meantime, the doctrine of eternal punishment is made to carry all this weight. And, even admitting that the doctrine of eternal punishment is the word of God, it seems to be forgotten that allegations may be attached to it that shall make it to be not the word of God, but the greatest falsehood in the universe.

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## NOTES.

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### NOTE 1.

#### CHRIST AND THE TESTIMONY OF JOSEPHUS (CHAPTER XII.).

It is sometimes said that in the days of Christ the belief of endless punishment was universal, and that he so spoke that he would be understood to teach it unless he guarded against such an understanding, and that he did not. Was this belief universal? What shall we say of Philo? Was he the only one who believed in annihilation? Again, in what language did Josephus represent those who believed in endless punishment? Did he express their views by the word *aionios*? Not in one instance. He speaks of the *eternal* prison of the bad, but does not use the word *aionios*, but *aidios* (*aidios*) ("Ant. Jud.," b. xviii., ch. i., § 3; Hudson, vol. ii., p. 793). Again ("De Bel. Jud.," b. ii., ch. viii., § 14, vol. ii., pp. 1064, 1065), he says the bad are punished with *endless* torment—*αἰῶ* (*aidio*), not *aionio*. In the case of the Essenes, he expresses the same idea by *ἀδιαλειπτος*, *never ending*.

Christ did not use these words, which are definite and unambiguous, but chose a word that had been used again and again to denote punishments already ended, and of which the prevailing sense was, *pertaining to an age or ages*. If, then, the belief in endless punishment was universal, Christ avoided the language in which it was expressed by Josephus for the people, and chose language not adapted to express it. Of course, he did not mean to teach it by such language.

## NOTE 2.

## ORIGEN AND UNIVERSAL RESTORATION.

To destroy the influence of the great Origen, it is sometimes said, to use the words of Dr. Pond, "he did not teach a system of universal restoration (as now understood), but rather of *perpetual rotation*. Origen did not deny the existence of eternal sin and suffering somewhere, but rather that there is any such thing as a settled, confirmed state of character anywhere."

In reply to this, I would say three things:

1. There are passages in which Origen denies and refutes this doctrine of rotation in the most explicit terms.

2. The passages in which he is alleged to teach it do not occur in his works as we have them.

3. Those who alleged them against him have undeniably slandered him on another point. They falsely charged him with teaching the transmigration of men into animals, and professed to prove it by extracts from his works. This has been proved. This fact renders the alleged quotations of these men untrustworthy.

It may be added that, even if Origen ever suggested the idea, it may have been merely to call out discussion, and not as his settled opinion, for he declares expressly that he did state some things for such a purpose.

But however that may be, in his last and mature writings he not only disavows it, but states the arguments sometimes presented for it, and refutes them.

In Rom. vi. 9, commenting on the assertion, "Christ being dead, dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him," he says, "The apostle decides, by an absolute decision, that now Christ dies no more, in order that those who live together with him may be secure of the endlessness of their life."

Again, in the same chapter, he states the arguments used for the idea of a fall hereafter in heaven, based on free-will. He replies to them thus: "Free-will indeed remains, but the power of the cross suffices for all orders, and all ages, past and to come. And that free-will *will not lead to sin* is plain, because love never faileth, and when God is loved with all the heart, and soul, and mind, and strength, and our neighbor as ourselves, where is the place for sin?"

After this, he adverts to the statement of John, on dwelling in love and in God, and adds, "For good reason, then, love, which alone is greatest of all, will keep *every creature* from falling. Then God will be all in all."

He considers the trials and temptations of Paul, and his exclamation, "What shall separate us from the love of Christ!" and thus reasons: "If all these cannot separate us from the love of God, much more free-will cannot separate us. For, though that power remains, yet the power of love is so great that it will subordinate all things to itself, especially since God has first given us such causes of love."

He applies this even to Lucifer. Of him he says: "He once could fall, before he was bound by the power of love, though placed among the cherubim. But after the love of God is shed abroad in the hearts of all, it is sure to be true, even of him, that love shall never fail."

These extracts are taken from one of his latest and most mature works. But even in his earliest, his "Principia," he sets forth similar views. After describing the consummation of the course of restoration, he says: "When all reasonable beings have been restored to this state, then the nature of this body of ours will be changed into the glory of a spiritual body, . . . in which state we are to believe that it will remain always and immutably by the will of the Creator, and this view is confirmed by the testimony of the apostle, 'we have a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens'" ("De Princip.," cap. 6).

Note how expressly this contradicts the charge of Jerome and Justinian, that he taught that the redeemed would hereafter fall and need new material bodies, and a new redemption.

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### NOTE 3.

DR. TAYLER LEWIS AND THE CRITICS.

THE views of this eminent orthodox divine on *aionios* were put forth under the sanction of the learned Prof. Schaff, of the Union Theological Seminary, and as a part of that great oecumenical work, Lange's "Commentary," and for four years they awoke no one of the watchmen of Zion to sound the note of alarm. At last I adopted

them, and indorsed them, and applied them to their legitimate use. And lo! an eminent professor at once sounds the note of alarm, and arrays himself against me. Why is this? Was he afraid to encounter such an orthodox host, and did he think me a more vulnerable antagonist? In charity I impute to him an ignorance of the fact that what he deems so dangerous an error had been put forth by such authorities. But, if so, why, when I had called his attention to it, did he confine his censure to me, and leave them uncensured? Ought he to be a respecter of persons? Is not error as dangerous sanctioned by such authorities as it is when I promulgate it?

A case similar to this is called to my memory by this occurrence: My sister, Mrs. Stowe, by speaking sympathetically of one of her friends that believed in a probation after death, created an alarm in an editor of a religious newspaper lest she should spread that error. This led him to publish a piece censuring her, and derogatory to the Beechers in general, and to myself in particular. Upon this I wrote to him stating that, in Lange's commentary on 1 Peter, the same idea was expressed and defended, and calling on him not to confine his censures for it to my sister, but to meet it and expose it where it could do so much more harm. He declined either to do this or to publish my letter.

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#### NOTE 4.

##### OLYMPIODORUS AND AIONIOS.

I HAVE given no reference to the striking passage from Olympiodorus on page 166. It was first brought to my notice by the great lexicon of Henry Stephens, but in a condensed form, and I could not find in any accessible library a copy of the work referred to. Upon this I wrote to my learned friend Prof. Abbott, of Cambridge, to whom I am under great obligation for his many favors and valuable aid. He informed me that, so far as he knew, only one edition of the commentary of Olympiodorus on the "Meteorologica" of Aristotle has ever been published, namely, the Aldine edition (Venice, 551, fol.). That was not in the Harvard College Library. But in Ideler's excellent edition of the "Meteorologica" (2 vols., fol., Leipzig, 1834-'36, 8vo), he found copious extracts from Olympiodorus

containing the passage. He quoted for me not only the passage which I have used, but also all the context in both directions. It may be found on folio 32 of the original Aldine edition of Olympiodorus, and in vol. i., p. 282, ff., of Ideler's edition of the "*Meteorologica*."

It is certainly a very remarkable passage. He is speaking of future punishment, and explicitly denies its absolute eternity; but, on the other hand, says that it is *aionian*, that is, lasting for a definite *aion*, or period, in which the sinner is purged.

Olympiodorus was an Aristotelic philosopher, and resided at Alexandria. He was a contemporary of Justinian, and survived him. In the passage quoted he is obviously using the word in its common, popular sense. That this is so is plain from the context, for he proceeds to say that there is another, a philosophical sense to the word, and he develops that, according to Plato, as I have explained it. But our Lord was not a Platonist. He spoke to the people, and used words in their popular sense.

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#### NOTE 5.

##### THEOPHILUS AND RESTORATION.

THE case of Theophilus, of whom I have spoken on page 284, shows strikingly how indefinitely, and, if I may so say, carelessly, men will write on a subject on which there has been no controversy and no sharpening of terms. In him there is now a passage that suggests eternal punishment, another that suggests annihilation, and another like that quoted from Mr. St. John, that suggests universal restoration; and yet each, by sharp criticism, can be rendered uncertain. The passage quoted by Mr. St. John may be explained by saying that he was thinking only of the holy, as is said of Paul in 1 Cor. 15. Again, he says that to those who do good deeds God will give immortality and *aionian* life. This seems to imply that the wicked are not rendered immortal, and perish in the *aionian* fire. Other passages, to those who believe that *aionios* means endless, seem clearly to teach endless punishment.

Athenagoras is more definite, for he positively and explicitly denies annihilation, and speaks of living a miserable life in fire, and says nothing of restoration.



## NOTE 6.

JUSTIN MARTYR, IRENÆUS, AND GREGORY OF NYSSA.

THE believers in the doctrine of the Church, and of eternal punishment, are greatly stumbled that three such eminent Christian men should, in different ways, deny that doctrine, and hold to annihilation, or universal restoration. Desperate efforts have been made to remove this great stumbling-block. In the case of Gregory of Nyssa, Germanus, Patriarch of Constantinople, finding that he could not eliminate the doctrine of universal restoration from his works as they stand, endeavored to prove that all the passages teaching it were spurious, and had been introduced by restorationists to sustain their doctrine. Even if he convinced himself, he has convinced nobody else to this day. For that doctrine is so wrought into his system that to cut it out would destroy his works.

But as to Justin, violent and unprincipled interpretation is resorted to. Thus, Maranus tries to get a denial of annihilation out of the sentence, *Αλλα μην ουδε αποθνησκειν φημι πασας τας ψυχας εγω*, which means, "I do not say that all souls die." He by a wrong position of the negative, and a wrong translation of it, brings out the assertion, "I say that no souls die." Otto well says that such a position of the negative cannot be defended, and that Maranus must have known it. Besides, it produces an immediate contradiction; for Justin soon goes on to say that some minds are punished and die. In the case of Irenæus, they rely on the passages in which he declares that punishment is *aionian*, which need not be translated eternal, and by them needlessly bring him into conflict with his express declarations that the wicked do at length cease to exist. Such criticism is audacious, but it cannot prevail.

## NOTE 7.

AUGUSTINE AND THE SIBYLLINE VERSES.

I HAVE said, on page 86, that Augustine, after stating the argument from the sympathy, pity, and prayers of the saints for the lost, in favor of their pardon and restoration, does not answer it. It is

*— at length*

true that he does not immediately answer it. He passes to other topics for the five following chapters, but then resumes the subject, and answers the argument. The argument is found in "The City of God" (book xxi., chapter xviii.), and is not there answered; but after five chapters—in chapter xxiv.—it is considered in substance, and answered. This influence of the prayers of the saints is presented as the great means of saving the lost in the Sibylline verses; and the fact that Augustine devotes two whole chapters to the subject shows how extensive and powerful was the influence of those verses.

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NOTE 8.

ON THE LIFE OF THE WORLD TO COME.—(On pp. 154, 158-162.)

OUR translation of the Bible, by absorbing all the forms and reduplications of *aion* and *olam* in the original, into modern abstract terms, such as eternal, eternity, forever, and forever and ever, has destroyed much of the variety, sentiment, beauty, and sublimity of the Hebrew and Greek originals. Take, for example (in 1 Tim., i. 17), the original expression, that God is *the king of the ages*, and to the imagination it pictures the dominion of God through the innumerable ages of the past and the future in their sublime procession. Translate this merely *the eternal king*, and the wings of the imagination are clipped, and we fall down upon a flat, prosaic abstraction. There are, in the Hebrew Bible and in the Septuagint, very many varieties of expression, made by compounding and reduplicating the olamic and æonic terms of the original, in which there is no blank abstraction, but the living ideas of ages and dispensations in their endless procession; but these are all swallowed up in some abstract phrase, such as forever, forever and ever, and all their variety, vitality, and sublimity, are fatally eclipsed.

In the translation *life eternal*, there is a similar loss of sublime and affecting associations. At the time when the words were uttered, all minds were absorbed in thoughts of the great, the coming age, called the world to come. Its glory, its purity, its hosts of angels and glorified saints, its vision of the revealed Godhead, its palms of victory, and thrones of power, were the objects which inspired and irradiated every mind. Even the Judge presents to the redeemed

the kingdom prepared before the foundation of the world as their final reward. How radiant, how glorious, how affecting to the heart, would be the life of that world! And, even now, what affects the mind more than the thought of heaven as our glorious home. All these thoughts are vividly presented in the hymn "Jerusalem! my glorious home, name ever dear to me," which, as we sing it, seems to make heaven a reality. All these glorious conceptions are annihilated by the passionless abstract term *eternal*. It is plain that *aionios* was changed, in the later creeds, into the full form "of the world to come," under the influence of a desire to present that world more fully to the imagination.

Our words denoting *eternity* have their roots in the words of the original, which appealed to the imagination and to the heart.

But they have been deprived of all their vitality, and eloquence, and beauty, and have become lifeless abstractions. They are like dead flowers, faded, dried, and pressed in an herbarium.

Is it not possible to raise a new crop of flowers from the old roots, for they are yet vital, which shall convey to us some of the sublimity, beauty, and imaginative power, of the originals?

The progress of science is revealing to us the successive ages of the immeasurable past. That in the future there are to be successive ages or dispensations, the language of the Bible would declare, if it were not deprived of a true and full utterance. Of the theories of the future which exclude such ages, Dr. Tayler Lewis well says, "What a narrow idea that the great antepast, and the great future after this brief world or *olam* has passed away, are to be regarded as having no chronology of a higher kind, no other (time) worlds and worlds of worlds, succeeding each other in number and variety inconceivable!" To see the full force of this passage, we must notice that he is not speaking of material worlds in space, but of time-worlds, that is, of ages and dispensations.

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